



# THE AMERICAN STORY

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"The coming generation shall and must understand the importance of what follows from the Prime Minister's historic mission to America. Cecil Rhodes always fore-shadowed that the destinies of the English-speaking peoples must be linked in order to save the civilisation of the world.

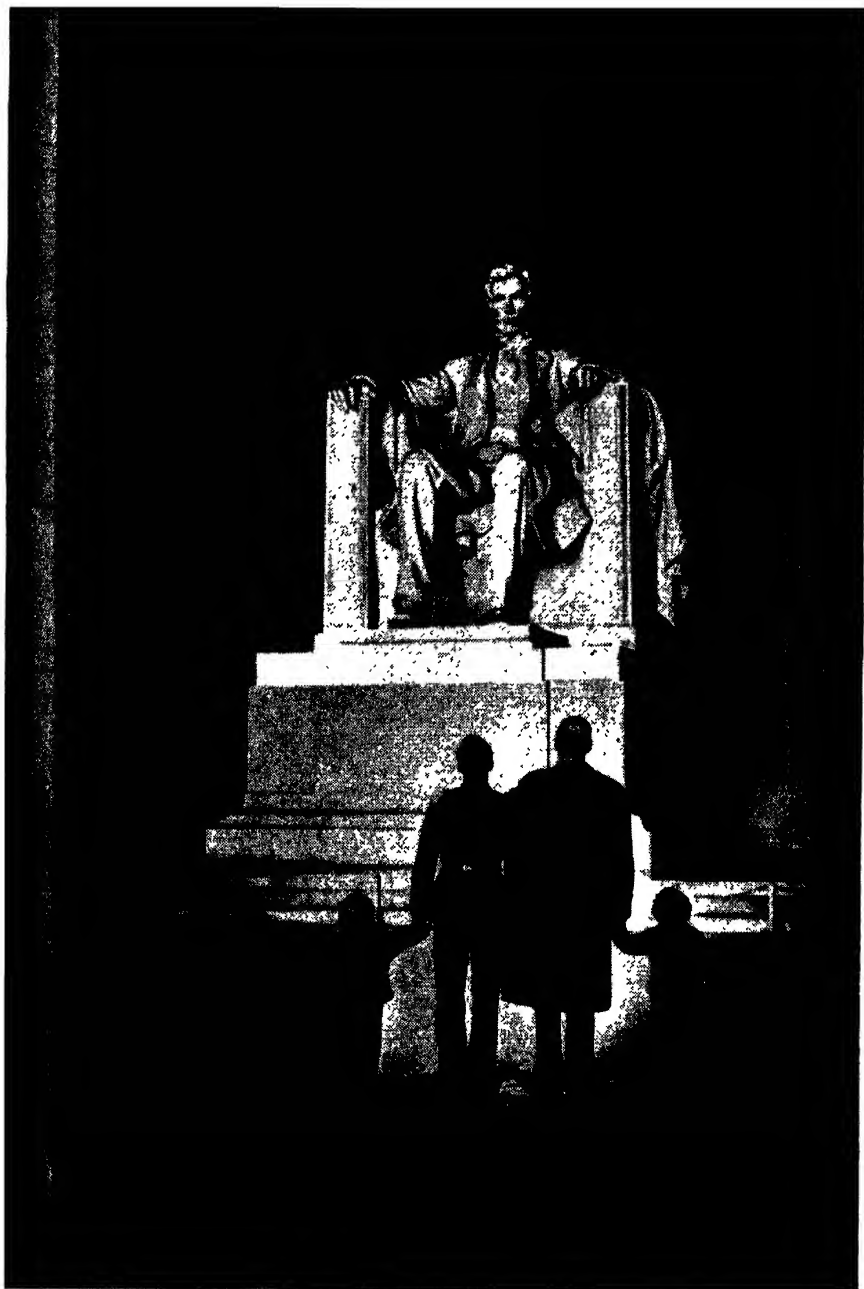
"The children and the youth of this country can see big things more clearly than some of their elders. Thus the teacher's task is not only to imbibe and to teach the history of America in our schools but to make history by linking indissolubly the younger generations of both countries."

*From a speech (21 Feb. 1942) by*

*Mr. R. A. Butler, President of the Board of Education*

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# FOREWORD

BY

Professor ARTHUR NEWELL

President of the American Outpost in Great Britain

Every ardent believer in the mission of Anglo-American co-operation, now and in the future, will welcome "The American Story" which Mr. Carter and Mr. Holroyd have given us. Not long before he died, Lord Tweedsmuir—good old John Buchan—said to the boys at Yale University: "Democracy, which for so long we gaily took for granted, has now become a cause, an adventure, a crusade." We Americans have now joined in that common crusade with the British, who, for so long, were the sole champions of all that we jointly cherish. It is quite true that our two peoples approach the task of crusading with a different outlook, a different background, and with different national temperaments, but the cause itself is common; it springs from the same sources. For two years we Americans have looked across to this compact, tight little island, with its compact people, closely knit into a community that hasn't been made overnight. It has stood firm against every fierce gale, like one of its own great oaks, coming out of deep roots. Bombs cannot touch its spirit or penetrate its ultimate defences. It's not to be smashed like a brick wall or a pane of glass. When hit, it's merely driven deeper into itself, to its inexhaustible spring of resistive and recuperative power. Hitler's cheap facade of blood and race, grown up like a mushroom in the night, is ersatz—without root or stability. It cannot prevail against the oak. That same quiet power spreads to Britain's scattered Commonwealth—those Dominions and Colonies in every part of the world. Scattered, yes, but united by the same organic strength—a Commonwealth of British communities.

And now America, sprung from the same deep roots, slowly recognizes its community kinship—not of blood, for America has every blood—but of common purpose and common endeavour. In the free working out of our American democratic process, we have been, for two years, wrestling with our soul. Watching us, you have seen American democracy in action—perhaps, for a while, not exactly the action you hoped for, but yet the honest action of 130,000,000 free people seeking to win from confusions and stubborn prejudices a new unity of faith and deed. Now once more we are with you. It is a peak moment in Anglo-American relations and the key word to it is—Understanding. I think we shall learn how to pull together in double harness. In spite of all our surface differences, we are very much alike in many more ways than that of speech. I was recently in the North of England and saw the cloth being woven in one of your Yorkshire mills. As I ran my hand over the cloth, I had the feeling of a single substance—all of a piece. And similarly I am struck with a deep conviction that

## FOREWORD

the texture of your people and our own is of the same stuff. The patterns may be quite different. We Americans go in for somewhat louder stripes and checks—somewhat more vivid colouring. That's as the eye catches the externals, but I believe the feel of the cloth is the same.

We have clashed in history and come out of it better friends. For my own part, I have no desire to forget that a great-great something-or-other grandfather of mine dressed himself up like an Indian on a memorable occasion and dumped tea into Boston Harbour. The Boston Tea Party is in my blood, and I am afraid I sometimes rub it in to my British friends. But after this lapse of time they seem to be able to take it. You are understanding us and our Colonial convictions better than you once did. We, in turn, are giving you a far more generous measure of deep understanding than we ever have before. That is why such a book as "The American Story," can do so much to give you, in this country, a vivid picture of this American background that so needs to be grasped and understood. We must, both of us—Americans and British alike, enlarge the maps of our minds. I fear both of us have been too content with small scale thinking; that's another way of saying insularity, provincialism, isolationism. That must stop, for the demands of the new world are for men of bigger stature, wider outlook and deeper faith in themselves and in their task. I hope this book of Mr. Carter and Mr. Holroyd may illuminate many a dark corner. You remember a story Emlyn Williams told one night over the wireless of the air raid shelter, dark and sleeping, save for a tiny gleam where a ten year old boy (both parents killed in a previous raid) was doing his school prep. for to-morrow by the light of a candle. As an American, my mind went back to that other candle in a log cabin in Illinois—little Abe Lincoln doing his sums with a piece of charcoal on a wooden shovel. Neither you nor we, in our democracies, will suffer the light of learning to be snuffed out—our schools to become the puppet system of a Führer who pulls the strings. I know your schools well, and I have no fears for them, and I know our American "little red school-house" and modern high schools. Yours and ours have much in common. They are none of them perfect, but they *are* serving the truth as they freely see it. "Learning," said Emlyn Williams, "has mended the world before; it will do it again." So I hope many thousands here in Britain will read this story. If it lights up your minds as it has mine, it will have made its strong contribution to our thinking, our planning and our action in fulfilling the duty of leadership laid upon us. Said Lord Bryce, during his great Ambassadorship in Washington: "The English-speaking peoples, by their common mind and purpose, can win such influence as will guide the feet of all mankind into the path of a better world."

May 1942

## PREFACE

*"But I do not undertake to define thee—hardly to comprehend thee"*  
Walt Whitman, "Poet of Democracy"

All our people, all young people from eight to eighty, now at long last desire to know something of the story of that America which our own ancestors helped to found and which shares our language and literature, and our way of life. We have not attempted in this little book the formal history of America, such as has already been achieved by more competent hands. But we believe there is room for—indeed imperative need of—a simpler and (as we hope) a more picturesque story.

We have also included something of the (hitherto much neglected) story of the South American Republics which are taking a more prominent place in the picture of our times.

We desire to thank Miss F. E. West L.L.A. for generous help, and to acknowledge our indebtedness to the books mentioned in the foot-notes here and there, more especially to the *Epic of America* by James Truslow Adams (Routledge) which is as fascinating as any novel.

For permission to use the script or "continuity" and to tell the story (in Chapter 1) of the Technicolour Film "Cavalcade of San Francisco", we are deeply grateful to the *Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Ltd.*, and to *Loew's Incorporated, California*.

The willing co-operation of the following is also gratefully acknowledged: *Ministry of Information, Warner Bros. Pictures Ltd., Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd., Twentieth Century Fox Film Co. Ltd., United Artists Corporation Ltd.*

We are also indebted to *Messrs. Macmillan & Co. Ltd.* for kind permission to quote verses from *Cowboy Songs* (John A. Lomax).

E.H.C.  
G.H.H.



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# THE AMERICAN STORY

## CHAPTER 1

### THE STORY OF THE FILM— "CAVALCADE OF SAN FRANCISCO"

The Film, "Cavalcade of San Francisco", takes us to the famous city which is the gateway to Northern California and an important port of call for ships that sail the Seven Seas. Today it has more than a quarter of a million inhabitants.

San Francisco has played a great part in the staging of the great Exhibitions known as *World Fairs*. The Palace of Fine Arts built for the World Fair of 1915 is still standing, and a quarter of a century later the "Golden Gate" World Fair was held. *Golden Gate* is the name given, at his visit in 1578 by Sir Francis Drake, to the straits connecting San Francisco Bay with the newly-found Pacific Ocean. The site chosen for the Fair was a man-made island, known as *Treasure Island*, and one of the greatest attractions was Adolph Vollmann's beautiful Film of which this chapter tries to tell the story—though it must be seen to appreciate its charm.

In the Film we see the great landmarks of *San Francisco*, and outstanding among them is the Golden Gate Bridge, which is the longest single span bridge in the world.

Another fine example of modern engineering is the *Toll Bridge*, connecting San Francisco with Oakland Bay, which is owned and worked by the people of California. It was opened to traffic in November, 1936. It had taken three and a half years to build and seventy-seven million dollars were invested in it.

The Film is produced in technicolour, and pictures the story of the West from *the dawn of history to modern times*, and vast multitudes of people visiting the Fair gazed on the colourful scenes from this great pageantry of the West, "the Land of the Free" (see Ch. 8).

Let us try to visualise some of the people and events of American history which are pictured in the Film. At

the close of the 17th century the Spanish Jesuit *missionaries* arrived on the Pacific coast and built their churches and mission houses. The sound of bells was heard mingling with the songs of birds and the whispering of the great trees. These brave pioneers called their little



Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.

A Wayside Altar

settlements after the saints and angels in their Church Calendar. The settlement that was to become the most important of all was given the name of San Francisco, in honour of the great Saint Francis of Assisi, and its fine *churches and cathedrals* are present-day witnesses

of the spiritual heritage handed down by these missionary-pioneers.

In due course Spanish settlers and *Mexican ranchers* found their way westwards into California—of which San Francisco became the capital—while other settlers were making their homes on the Atlantic and eastern seaboard. From the early days of the 19th century there was an ever-growing movement towards the West. The covered wagons, known as *prairie schooners*, rolled over the prairies, and at last found a way through the passes of the Rockies into California. These pioneers were courageous, determined people, braving extreme hardships, with nothing to sustain them but faith—faith in their God, and faith in the prospect of the *Golden West*.

“ Home, Home on the Range ;  
 On the Range ;  
 Where the deer and the antelope play ;  
 Where seldom is heard  
 A discouraging word,  
 And the skies are not cloudy all day.”

See ! Here are crowds of new-comers. Hardy men

with their picks and mining gear ! They are *Forty-niners*—the genuine gold-diggers of 1849 who have heard that California is indeed a land of Golden Promise. In the wake of the miners come other adventurers, all eager to get rich by hook or by crook, and some of them ready even to snatch the precious nuggets from other men's pockets.



Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.

## Prairie Schooners

Next we see the Wells Fargo *Stage Coach* pass across the screen. This hardy vehicle maintained contact, with many a thrill and adventure, between the East and West of the vast continent. But out on the prairie the clang of hammers is already ringing the knell of stage coach and old *Red Indian trail*. The iron road is nearing completion. Soon the *Great Iron Horse* will go puffing its way from ocean to ocean.

It is finished. The tracks of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railways meet at last. Crowds of people have gathered to witness the meeting of the two trains, one from the East, and the other from the West. Cheers are raised, hats and handkerchiefs wave, as Leland Stanford,

the governor of California, comes forward to drive into the railway track the *golden spike* which marks the completion of the Pacific Railway (see Ch. 15). *East and West* are at last linked through 3000 miles by the iron road.

So the Pageant passes. Brave Jesuit missionaries, Spanish settlers, Mexican ranchers, cowboys in their picturesque costume, hardy miners, courageous pioneers,



Indian Braves      Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.

adventurous traders, stage-coach drivers, and railmen have all played their part in the great Cavalcade of the Golden West, moving one after another across the screen, bringing the flags of many nations into the folds of one—the Flag, *The Star-Spangled Banner* (see Ch. 10) that now waves jubilantly over the land of the free and the home of the brave.

“Thy mandates make heroes assemble,  
When Liberty’s form stands in view ;  
Thy banners make tyranny tremble,  
When borne by the red, white and blue.”

## CHAPTER 2

## TODAY AND FAR-OFF DAYS

"Sail—sail thy best, ship of Democracy !  
Of value is thy freight—'tis not the PRESENT only,  
The PAST is also stored in thee !"

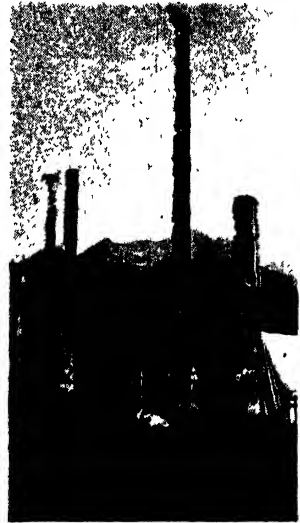
*Walt Whitman, American poet*

*How did this Present come from the Past ?  
And was it a New World ?*

We often speak of America as the New World because the peoples of Europe knew nothing about it until about four centuries ago. But it was by no means "new". For ages life had been going on in its vast forests and on its wide plains. Not only had the *Red Indian hunters* been marking out their "trails" and setting up their camps and wigwams, but in Central and South America great empires and cities had grown up and become rich. Of all this, the people of the so-called Old World knew nothing.

The first men of Europe to sight the Western Continent were the hardy *Norsemen*, ancestors of the heroic Norwegians of today. About the time of our King Alfred, some of their war-bands had reached Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Then they went on to Greenland and beyond and sailed along the coast of North America. Yet six centuries passed before the peoples of Europe realised that a vast continent lay on the other side of the Atlantic between Europe and Asia.

While England and other new nations of Europe were rising out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, "the tribes" of the Red Indians were still travelling over the vast hunting-grounds of what we call North America. How long they had done so, or whence they came, no one



*Canadian National Railways  
Totem Poles  
(Emblems of Indian Tribes)*

knows. Perhaps in ages long ago, there was a land-bridge from eastern Asia, and there may have been great tracks of dry land stretching far away to the west from the present western coast of America—land which now lies beneath the Pacific waves. It is interesting to know that the tribes, both in North and South America, have stories of a great flood, similar to those told in the Old Testament and in other ancient writings of Eastern peoples.

By the time Columbus and other European explorers reached the mainland of America, the Red Indians (as we call the tribes) had become more or less settled. They



Indian Tepees, or Wigwams

still depended on hunting and fishing for the greater part of their food supply, but they also had fields in which they grew vegetables and crops of Indian corn (maize). Each tribe had its own hunting-grounds extending over vast areas, though not too large for their support, for the hunters had to supply their families with deerskins and furs for clothing as well as flesh for food.

The weapons used by the Red Indian hunters and warriors were bows and arrows, hatchets called tomahawks, and wooden clubs. Their hatchets and the arrow heads were still made of stone, for the Red Indians were still living in their *Stone Age* of culture.

In the north of the continent, the Red Indian villages consisted of groups of tents—tepees or wigwams—made of bark or skins. Further south, the Iroquois Indians built themselves “long-houses” of wood, and in the south-west some of the tribes had huts of stone or sun-dried bricks. The most remarkable of all the Red Indian

homes were those of the "cliff-dwellers". These rose to as many as six storeys—the first *sky-scrapers*—and contained a great number of rooms. These dwellings were often made at some distance from the fields of the tribe, and were mainly used for purposes of refuge and defence in tribal wars. War was as much a part of the everyday life of the Red Indians as hunting and tilling the fields.

Migrating tribes in periods of peace, and warriors in times of war, travelled by clearly marked paths known as *trails*. These trails extended nearly all over the vast



Wide World Photos

"Scotts Bluff" and the old Oregon Trail (Mitchell Pass)

continent, passing through forests and over plains, and linking up streams and rivers by portages—the routes by which a bark canoe can be best carried from one navigable stream to another. A modern road-engineer could scarcely have chosen better routes than these centuries-old trails, which often became the wagon roads of white men in later days.

The greater part of North America contained comparatively few people scattered over a vast area. But further South, in the part we now call Mexico, there lived a people known as the Maya Indians who built

cities with stone houses, temples and palaces. Although they used tools made of stone and knew nothing of mortar, some of their buildings are still standing.

The Mayas may have moved south-east from the Pacific coast, but according to their own old stories, they came from the "Place of Reeds", wherever that may be, and wandered for more than a hundred years, and met with many adventures as they passed through the *Land of Bright Colours* on their way south. They had a system

of writing, and used a kind of paper made from the leaves of a plant. Their history can be traced back at least fifteen hundred years.

About a thousand years ago the Mayas were conquered by other Mexican Indians called the *Aztecs*, which means *the Crane (or Heron) People*, a name given them because they first settled in the marshland around Lake Tezcucó. They, too, had a system of writing which they



*Canadian National Railways*

Chief Joe Healey and Mrs. Healey

may have learned from the Mayas. They also had a calendar in which the years ran in "cycles" or sets, each consisting of fifty-two years, the same names being given to the years occupying the same place in each cycle.

The Aztecs had also learned to weave fine cloth from cotton fibre. They knew nothing of iron, nor the use of the wheel, but they made beautiful things of gold. Their chief warriors wore golden breast-plates under their feathered robes; their rich men and women had lovely ornaments of *gold and precious stones*. Quills filled with

gold dust were used as money. Their soldiers had swords made from a hard volcanic rock known as obsidian. Great markets were held in which feathers, plumes and weapons were sold as well as articles of food and household goods. A portion of the market was set apart for the sale of gold by weight, and of golden ornaments in the form of birds and animals, decorated with precious stones.

But in spite of all this wealth and splendour, the Aztec rulers and priests were cruel tyrants, and thousands of human beings were sacrificed every year in honour of their gods.

### CHAPTER 3

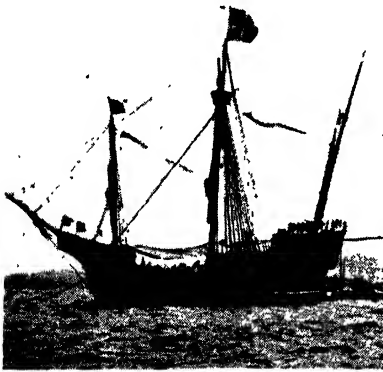
#### THE FAIR GOD AND HIS CHILDREN

One of the hero-gods of the Aztecs was called Quetzalcoatl—"the Man from the Sun". He was also called the *fair god* because he was said to have a white skin. Unlike the other gods, he did not desire human sacrifices. Long, long ago, he had visited his people, and had taught them all their arts and crafts. Then he went down to the sea-shore, entered a boat drawn by great serpents, and floated away towards the east, the sun-rising. Before he went he promised that he would return in the year called *ce acatl*, and bring many sons with him. But the cycles of years moved round ; *ce acatl* came and went, and the *fair god* did not return, although his people still worshipped and waited.

However, white-skinned strangers were on their way. It was *Christopher Columbus*, sailing in the service of Spain, who made in his tiny ship in the year 1492 the first voyage of 3000 miles across the great ocean. He reached some islands on the other side of the Atlantic and returned with the joyful news that he had found the Indies. Hence the name "Red Indians" given to the natives of this "new world", and the name *West Indies* given to those islands though they have nothing to do with the real India. Other adventurers followed. In time it was discovered that the land on the western side of the Atlantic was not the Indies or a part of Asia, but

a vast continent hitherto unknown—and it received the name of *America* in honour of one of the less important of the adventurers, Amerigo (Latin, Americus) Vespucci. But the name of Columbus is still treasured in British “Columbia”, and in the South American republic of “Colombia”.

Meanwhile the people of *Mexico*, the chief city of the Aztec empire, heard strange stories of white men who had appeared at various places on the coast. Strange things were happening in the city itself. Part of it had been destroyed by a great flood when Lake Tezcuco,



E.N.A.

Columbus's Flagship, the *Santa Maria*

without earthquake or any visible cause, overflowed its banks. The following year one of the temples was destroyed by fire, the outbreak of which was a mystery. Finally, three great comets were seen blazing across the midnight sky. Was the *fair god* about to return? Was there not an old Mayan prophecy about a white-skinned stranger, who would “*bring the lightning in his hand*” and conquer the country? Then, at last, in the year ce acatl, the white stranger came. “Quetzalcoatl” seemed to be the Spaniard, Hernando Cortés.

It was the year 1519. *Cortés* brought with him six or seven hundred men, eighteen horses and a few cannons. He also had with him a Red Indian slave girl who understood both the Spanish and the Aztec languages, and she acted as his interpreter. The chief men of the province came to meet the strangers when they landed. They told Cortés that the country was ruled by a great monarch, named *Montezuma*, and they must send him word why the strangers had come. Cortés noticed that some of the natives were busily drawing, on white cotton cloth, pictures of the ships, the soldiers and the horses. The horses aroused great interest, for the natives had *never*

*before seen a horse.* In order to impress them still further Cortés ordered the cannons to be fired, and when the natives saw the havoc caused among the trees of a near-by wood, some fled, others fell to the ground terrified at the presence of men who seemed to command the thunder and lightning of the heavens.

Messengers carried the strange tidings to Montezuma in the city of Mexico. In the capital there was much questioning. Had the *fair god* returned with his sons? Was this the white conqueror with the lightning in his hand? Montezuma acted with caution. He sent some of his chief men to the coast, bearing gifts—thirty cart-loads of cotton cloth as fine as silk, figures of birds and animals cast in *gold and silver*, gold and silver plates, and crests of gold and silver thread adorned with pearls and precious stones. A Spanish helmet which Cortés had sent to the Emperor was returned, filled with gold-dust. The messengers begged the strangers in the Emperor's name to accept these gifts as tokens of friendship—and to return to their own land. But the sight of all this gold made Cortés even more determined to visit the city of Mexico itself.

Cortés now founded his first town on the coast, and he named it "*villa rica de la Vera Cruz*"—that is, "the rich town of the True Cross." He left some of his men to guard it. He burned his ships to show his men that there was no retreat; they must either conquer or perish. Then he set out for the interior with five hundred men, fifteen horses and six cannons. Many of the chiefs hated Montezuma because of his cruelty and were ready to help the Spaniards. By the time he reached the city of Mexico, Cortés had 6000 natives under his command as well as his own men. Montezuma came to meet his visitor. He was borne in a litter, and surrounded by all the pomp and glory of an Aztec emperor. The Mexicans bowed low before the white men, who were perhaps indeed the sons of the *fair god*! Cortés was taken to one of the royal palaces which was so large that there was room not only for the Spaniards but also for their native allies. In one of his letters Cortés described this

wonderful old *city of Mexico*—"the most beautiful thing in this world"—its palaces with polished, glistening towers, the terraces and the roof-gardens. He was much impressed by the "Temple", or "*Sacred City*", a huge enclosure bounded by four walls and entered by four fortified gates, and within this space were twenty pyramids, and the highest was the temple of the Mexican war-god.

Some of the Spaniards became alarmed for their own safety. They feared the Mexicans would destroy the bridges and make their visitors their prisoners. Cortés therefore decided to seize Montezuma and hold him prisoner until he agreed to pay homage to the King of Spain, the great Emperor Charles V (nephew of our Catherine of Aragon). Before he could carry out this plan, a message arrived from Vera Cruz, saying that the settlement had been attacked by the army of a rival Spanish leader. Cortés had to return to the coast, where he defeated the rival leader whose soldiers now joined Cortés. Then he returned to Mexico to find the Mexicans in revolt.

Montezuma perished in an attempt to address his rebellious subjects. A new emperor was chosen and he at once attacked the Spaniards and drove them out. Encouraged by this success, the Mexicans came out to battle on the open plain. This was just what Cortés wanted, and he won a victory which decided the fate of Mexico. The city itself held out against a siege lasting several months, but was at last taken. For three hundred years Mexico remained under the rule of Spanish viceroys.

*The Immortal Voyage of 1492*

*Columbus's Letter to a Courtier of the King of Spain*

"Sir : As I know that you will have pleasure from the great victory which Our Lord hath given me in my voyage, I write you this by which you shall know that in thirty-three days I passed over to the Indies with the fleet which the most illustrious King and Queen, our Lords, gave me ; where I found very many islands peopled with inhabitants beyond number. And of them

all I have taken possession for their Highnesses, with proclamation and the royal standard displayed ; and I was not gainsaid.

To the first which I found I gave the name Sant Salvador, in commemoration of His High Majesty who hath marvellously given all this : the Indians call it Guanaham. The second I named the Island of Santa Maria de Concepcion, the third Ferrandina, the fourth Isabella, the fifth La Isla Jauna (Cuba) . . . . . When I reached Jauna, I followed its coast westwardly and found it so large that I thought it might be mainland, the province of Cathay (China). And as I did not thus find any towns or villages on the sea-coast, save small hamlets with the people of which I could not get speech, because they all fled forthwith, I went on further in the same direction, thinking I should not miss of great cities or towns.

I sent two men into the country to learn if there were a king or any great cities. They travelled for three days and found innumerable small villages and a numberless population but nought of ruling authority . . . . I followed the coast eastwardly for a hundred and seven leagues as far as where it terminated ; from which headland I saw another island to the east . . . . . to which I at once gave the name La Spanola (Hispaniola or Hayti) . . . . .

The lands are all most beautiful . . . . . and full of trees of a thousand kinds, so lofty that they seem to reach the sky. And I am assured that they never lose their foliage ; as may be imagined, since I saw them as green and as beautiful as they are in Spain during May . . . . . And the nightingale was singing, and other birds of a thousand sorts, in the month of November . . . . . In the earth are many kinds of metals ; and there is a population of incalculable number . . . . . The people have no other weapons than the stems of reeds in their seeding state, on the end of which they fix little sharpened stakes. Even these they dare not use . . . . .

They believed very firmly that I, with these ships and crews, came from the sky . . . . . Wherever I arrived they went running from house to house and to the neigh-

bouring villages, with loud cries of “*Come ! come to see the people from Heaven !*”

This is a land to be desired—and once seen, never to be relinquished—in which, in a place most suitable and best for its proximity to the gold mines and for traffic with the mainland both on this side (Europe) and with that yonder belonging to the Great Can (Khan or Ruler of China) . . . . In another island, which they assure me is larger than Española, the people have no hair. In this there is incalculable gold ; and concerning this and the rest I bring Indians with me as witnesses . . . . And I believe that I have discovered rhubarb and cinnamon, and I shall find that the men whom I am leaving there will have discovered a thousand other things of value . . .



The first Mass said in America

E.N.A.

An illustration from the volume *Nova Navigatio Novae Orbis*, by Honorius Philoponus, published in Munich in 1621

Since thus our Redeemer has given to our most illustrious King and Queen, and to their famous kingdoms, this victory in so high a matter, Christendom should have rejoicing therein, and make great festivals, and give solemn thanks to the Holy Trinity for the great exaltation they shall have by the conversion of so many peoples to our holy faith ; and next for the temporal benefit which will bring hither refreshment and profit, not only to Spain but to all Christians. This,

briefly, in accordance with the facts. Dated on the caravel (i.e. his tiny ship, the *Nina*) off the Canary Islands, the 15th February of the year 1493.

At your command,

The Admiral."

(From *Readings in American History*, by Dr. Muzzey, by kind permission of Messrs. Ginn & Co. Inc., Boston, U.S.A.)

## CHAPTER 4

### THE STORY OF "OL' MAN RIVER"

While Cortés was striving to extend Spanish power over the whole of the land now called Mexico, other Spaniards went to seek for treasure in *Florida* (Spanish for "flowery"; it was discovered on "flowery" Easter Day)—the name was at that time applied to a territory much larger than the present-day south-eastern State. The Spanish leader was Ferdinando de Soto who was born about 1500. In order to obtain funds, he sold lands he owned in Spain. Other men were eager to join in the venture and its promised profits, and they too sold houses and vineyards and olive orchards. In this way sufficient money was raised to buy four ships and to arm, man and provision them, and to hire 600 foot soldiers and 120 horsemen.

*De Soto* left the port of San Lucar, near Cadiz, and sailed to Havana, in Cuba, the largest island in the West Indies and already a Spanish possession. The Cubans themselves had sent ships to Florida to seek for a good harbour, and two Red Indian captives had been brought back. These Indians were ready to tell any tale that they thought would please their captors, and the rumour soon spread through Havana that Florida was the richest country yet discovered. This good news made *De Soto* and his companions more eager than ever to be off to gather these riches.

A fortnight later they landed on the west coast of Florida. *De Soto*, like Cortés, burned his ships lest they should tempt his men to retreat. Then the company set out on their great march. They were well armed and

had a large supply of provisions. In case the march took longer than expected, they had a drove of live pigs which could be slaughtered if food ran short. They also had *bloodhounds*, for use if necessary against the Indian guides.

The first season's wanderings brought them northwards towards the Alleghany Mountains. The Indian tribes were always unfriendly ; the two captives brought from Cuba escaped ; and a Spaniard whom they found in the hands of the Indians could give no clue to the whereabouts of gold and silver. Hired Indian guides led them astray, often taking them into bogs and morasses. At last the men were so discouraged that they begged their leader to turn back. De Soto refused, saying, "I will not turn back until I have seen with my own eyes the poverty of the country". One Indian guide lured them on to the north with tales of a country, ruled by a woman, where gold abounded. But a scouting party sent on ahead returned and declared they had reached impassable mountains ; although they had sought for gold and silver, the only plunder they brought back was a *buffalo* robe.

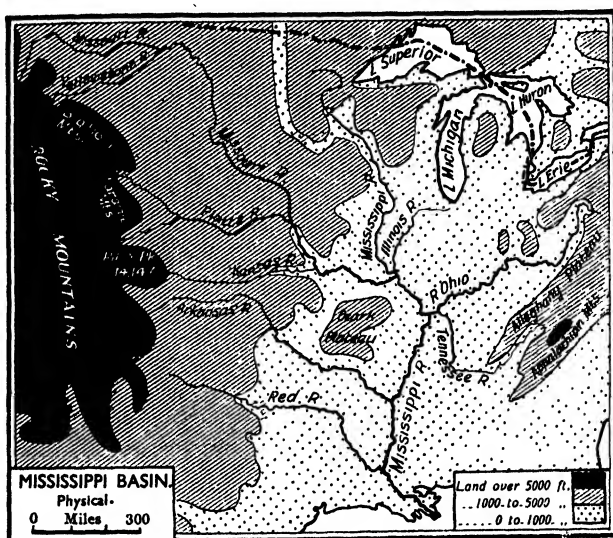
Winter was coming on. The Spaniards were weary of sleeping in the open, so they decided to occupy an Indian town. When the Indians resisted, De Soto's men set fire to the houses, and numbers of the brave defenders perished. But the flames also destroyed some of the baggage of the Spaniards which had been carried into the town.

Ships from Cuba arrived off the coast bringing provisions according to plan ; but although De Soto knew they were there, he retreated northwards, being too proud to own that he had failed. After a time the explorers reached an unoccupied Indian town. The Indian cabins, and a few rough huts they put up for themselves, gave them shelter for the winter, and the crop of maize which they found standing uncut in the fields was a welcome addition to their food supply.

When spring came round, De Soto persuaded an Indian chief to send him a hundred men to act as porters. The Indians arrived and were brought into the village.

Soon afterwards half the houses burst into flames ; wild *war whoops* rang through the air—the Indians were burning the Spaniards out, as the Spaniards had burned out the Indians of the other village ! Some of the horses and most of the pigs were burned to death ; other horses broke loose and dashed away into the forest. Although he had now lost the baggage that had escaped the previous fire, De Soto refused to own that he was defeated.

The party struggled on, and at last in the year 1541 they reached a magnificent river which the Red Indians



De Soto and his companions were the first white men to see the waters of the Mississippi (1541)

called the Mississippi, meaning *the father of waters*. No white men had ever before seen this mighty waterway, and several weeks were spent exploring its upper reaches. De Soto then decided to follow the course of the stream to the sea. But this was far from easy. The party was soon lost in the marshes of the Red River Valley. Indians could not or would not tell them how far it was to the sea. Dense forests, great beds of canes through which it was impossible to force a way, marshes

and water-courses, made the going so slow that it was often impossible to travel more than three or four miles a day.

At last, De Soto, worn out by hardship and disappointment, fell ill and died. The Spaniards tried to hide the fact of their leader's death from the Indians, so they wrapped his body in cloaks weighted with sand and sank it in "the father of waters" which De Soto had discovered.

The rest of the party then tried to reach Mexico by way of the forests. After six months of hopeless wanderings, they again found themselves on the banks of the *Mississippi*, near the mouth of the Red River. Then, with the courage of despair, these half-starved men decided to build boats and travel on the river itself. They had one saw which they had kept safe and sound through all their wanderings and misfortunes. They collected every scrap of iron they could find to make nails, and at last they managed to build seven frail vessels. All the time they were spied upon by the Indians who noticed that the white men had lost their old power of bringing thunder and lightning from the weapons they carried in their hands.

They killed the few remaining pigs and the last of the horses for food. Then they embarked, and seventeen days later reached the Gulf of Mexico. Out of the 750 men who had sailed from Spain five years before, only 300 remained. Thus did the first white men discover and journey upon the great river Mississippi, the "*Ol' Man River*" that just "keeps on rollin' along".

## CHAPTER 5

### THE PALE-FACES AND THE REDSKINS

1. The Spaniard, Cortés, had conquered Mexico, and ten years later another Spaniard, Pizarro, conquered *Peru* to the south of Mexico. The Spaniards and their neighbours the Portuguese were the first peoples of Europe to profit by Columbus's New World, the greatest discovery of all time. They settled mainly in the south, as we can see from numerous names on the map of today : Rio de

Janeiro is Spanish for "The River of January" and Trinidad is Columbus's Spanish name for "The Trinity", while Rio de la Plata is Portuguese for "The River of Silver". To this day *Spanish and Portuguese* are the languages most commonly spoken in South America. It was the Portuguese explorer Cabral, who discovered in 1500 *Brazil* which for three centuries belonged to the Portuguese Empire until it became a free republic.

Spain was also the first European nation to win the best of the West Indian islands, and it was Spain who made those two famous tropical products—*sugar and tobacco*—popular in Europe.

The civilised and wealthy *South America* which attracted Spain and Portugal was very different from the *North* where the Redskins were still living in their Stone Age, and where first the French, and later the British, began to set up colonies. Today when we speak of America we think mainly of the North, but it was not so in our Tudor times when Spain was the most powerful nation in the world and lord of South America.

The *French* were the first to explore and colonise the North, where they founded three great colonies, Canada (now Quebec), Acadia (now Nova Scotia), and Louisiana. It was during the time of our King Henry VIII that a French explorer and a devout Catholic, Jacques Cartier, entered a great river estuary. It was St. Lawrence's Day in the year 1535, and Cartier gave the gulf the name of the saint, and later on the name was given to the great river itself. Cartier explored the river, and landed at the spot where now stands Quebec, which still has its French-speaking inhabitants, with houses and streets reminding us of a 17th century French town.

A friendly Redskin chief invited Cartier to his "*Kanata*"—which is a Red Indian word for a collection of huts. Cartier thought it was the name of the district, and put it on his map as Canada. Other Indians were less friendly, and when he reached a village called Hochelaga, "*three men painted black, with horns upon their heads*", came out in a little boat and rowed round the vessels, making various strange gestures and speeches." They said they

were messengers from the supreme god of "the tribes", and they warned the strangers that terrible things would happen if they tried to land. But Cartier was not so easily frightened ; he landed, and climbed the hill behind the Red Indian village. From that hill he had a grand view of river and forest, and he named it Mount Royal which in French is *Mont-real*, the name still borne by one of the great cities of Canada which stands on that spot.

First the Spanish and Portuguese ; next the French ; and then the English—in that order, the *pale-faces* (the Redskins' name for the white men) colonised the New World from the Old World.

The first *English colonies* on the American sea-board were not successful. The earliest attempt was made on what is now the North Carolina coast, but two years later the settlers left for home. The Red Indians were still rejoicing at the departure of these "pale-faces" when more ships came, but they left only fifteen men behind when they sailed away and these the Indians soon attacked. One man was killed ; the rest put out to sea in a small boat and probably perished in the waves.

In the year before the Great Armada of 1588, a small band of English colonists, including some women and children, arrived in the New World. They had come to set up the colony of Virginia (so named by Sir Walter Raleigh in honour of Queen Elizabeth), and when an English baby was born soon afterwards she was named Virginia—she was the first English child to be born in America. The ships that had brought the colonists soon sailed away, and it was four years before any other English ships came. Then, alas ! they found the colony deserted. An empty fort, and a few ruined huts overgrown by weeds and creepers, were the only traces that remained. The colonists had disappeared. Probably the Indians could have told how ! Indeed there were tales told afterwards of white people living in Indian encampments ; these may have been the boys and girls from the colony. Perhaps little Virginia was one !

Meanwhile, the first English ship had visited that other coast of America, the *Pacific*. The ship was the "Golden Hind" and the captain was *Francis Drake*. Drake anchored for a time in San Francisco Bay, where he was welcomed by a Red Indian chief and presented with a crown of feathers. He took possession of the land in the name of Queen Elizabeth and named it New Albion, after the oldest name of our island.

Towards the close of the 16th century, the Spaniards were the only Europeans who had achieved success in the New World. In 1574 there were 200 Spanish cities and towns in America, with a population of 160,000, mostly men. In the city of Mexico, a university had been founded, and a school for native boys attended by a thousand pupils. The Aztec Indians were being taught the Catholic Faith, and the foundation was laid of the cathedral which still remains one of the grandest church buildings in America.

The Spaniards brought so many cattle and horses into Mexico that they were soon running wild over the country, and straying away to the north where they were captured by the Red Indians. Soon the Sioux and other Redskin tribesmen of the plains were galloping on horseback where their forefathers had trudged patiently on foot. Under Spanish rule, *cotton and sugar* were grown in tropical Mexico, and many new plants and flowers were introduced. But every year the Spanish fleet carried off vast quantities of *gold and silver*. The Spaniards had put an end to the cruel practice of sacrificing human beings to the Mexican gods, though they made thousands of Mexicans work like slaves in the mines. Meanwhile in Europe the Spanish Armada was defeated by the English. In spite of all the wealth brought from her American dominions, the Spanish Empire—"one of the most powerful and splendid that ever existed in the world"—began to wane.

II. *North America*, when the British first went there, was a vast wilderness of prairies and forests, of mountains and deserts, without towns or roads or farms. In 1607 three tiny ships crossed the ocean from England with

one hundred and fifty persons, and they landed on what is now the coast of *Virginia* and there made the first permanent British Settlement in America, the first of the Southern Group of Colonies. It began on a river, thirty miles from the sea to avoid surprise by the Spanish, and it was named Jamestown in honour of King James I. There the *first parliament* in a New World colony was held. There were no parliaments or assemblies in the French and Spanish colonies.

The infant colony had to face Red Indian raids and arrows, sickness and other hardships, and seemed such a hopeless effort that the Spanish Ambassador in London advised his fellow-countrymen to pay no attention to it—it was sure to die of itself! But thanks to the courage of *Captain John Smith*, the colony did not die. It lived and grew. It was the first seed of a great nation.

Once Captain John Smith (according to his own story) was taken by the Red Indians, who were about to brain him with their clubs when he was saved by the king's "darling daughter", called *Pocahontas*. She rushed to rescue him and put her head between the Captain's and the clubs, and so his life was saved. This Indian princess later married an Englishman named Rolfe, and her descendants are still living in our eastern counties.



The monument at Jamestown, Virginia, to Princess Pocahontas

In 1620 came the Pilgrim Fathers to North America, sturdy Puritans seeking a home in a new land where they could worship God in the way they believed to be right. New Plymouth was the first of the Northern New England Colonies, and later New Plymouth was joined to Massachusetts (a Red Indian name), the most important of these Northern Colonies. The Pilgrim Fathers had a harder task than the Virginians to the south, for their more northerly climate was less pleasant and their soil less fertile. Longfellow's poem about the colonist, Miles

Standish, tells of their fight with the fierce Indians.

Unlike the Virginians, they held no royal charter giving them the right of local self-government. But even before they left their tiny sailing ship, the *Mayflower*, they found that there were unruly members in their company, and some form of government was necessary. They therefore drew up a declaration, which every grown-up member signed, that they would submit to such government and governors as they should "by common consent" agree to make and choose. Upon this simple democratic document was based, a century and a half later, the famous Declaration of Independence by which the colonies became a nation—the United States.

The Dutch founded the little colony of New Amsterdam, and thither in 1649 there came from Holland Klaes Martensen Van Roosevelt<sup>1</sup> to try his fortunes—the ancestor of two great Presidents of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt. New Amsterdam later fell into British hands, and was renamed New York, after the Duke of York, the future James II.

A Catholic nobleman, Lord Baltimore, founded (1634) Maryland, the first place in the Christian world where religious freedom was the rule until Virginian Protestants ended it.

The religious and other troubles in Stuart England caused many to seek homes beyond the seas. Thousands of people began to think of America as a *land of promise and freedom*—as thousands have done ever since—and many crossed the ocean from Ireland as well as from Great Britain to settle on the Atlantic seaboard, and so the number of colonies increased.

New York formed one of the middle group of colonies, and south of it Pennsylvania was founded (1682) for the benefit of the Quakers by their noble leader, William Penn, son of a British admiral. Its capital is called Philadelphia (Greek for "brotherly love"), and it was the first modern town to be laid out on systematic lines.

- The settlers in Virginia and other southern colonies found it difficult to find labourers to work on their

<sup>1</sup>See *The Roosevelts and America* (1942) by M. Fortescue Pickard (Herbert Joseph)

estates, known as *plantations*, and for this reason and because of the great heat and simple routine of the work, *negro slaves* were imported from Africa (the first in a Dutch ship in 1619). As the number of settlers and the plantations of rice, indigo, sugar and tobacco increased, more and more slaves were imported. This barbarous trade did not shock people in those days. But its horrors cannot be exaggerated. The first Englishman to take part in it was Hawkins, in Elizabeth's days, "in a ship called, by a ghastly misnomer, *the Jesus*."<sup>1</sup>



The statue of William Penn E.N.A.  
atop the City Hall Tower, Philadelphia

Meanwhile the French were still dreaming of an American Empire. They had settlements along the St. Lawrence, the chief of which was Canada, with Quebec as its capital. French explorers also discovered the *Great Lakes*, and brave Jesuit missionaries and French *fur-traders* pushed their way westward and south-west.

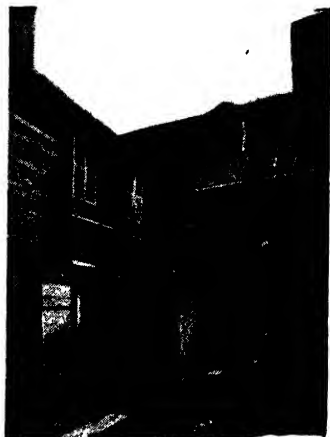
III. In the year 1682, when Penn was founding his colony, a Frenchman, Robert La Salle, who had been educated by the Jesuits, travelled the whole length of the Mississippi from the Ohio River to the sea. All the vast territory from the Great Lakes and Manitoba in the north to the Gulf of Mexico in the south, and from the British colonies in the east to the Spanish colonies in the west, he claimed as French territory, and with shouts of "Vive le Roi" and with volleys of musketry, he named it Louisiana, in honour of Louis XIV, King of France. Two years later, La Salle attempted to set up another French colony on the Gulf of Mexico, but he spent months in fruitless journeys, and then this intrepid

<sup>1</sup>See Marten and Carter's *Histories*, Book III

explorer was murdered in Texas by disloyal followers.

The Spanish were still busy. Much of their pioneer work was done by Jesuits who set up missions in New Mexico, where the town of Santa Fé (Spanish for "Holy Faith") was founded, and it has ever since been the capital of New Mexico. At the close of the 17th century the Jesuits were given the task of making settlements on the *Californian* coast where (since Drake's visit) raids by English freebooters were becoming more frequent. Soon, both French and Spanish missionaries were competing for the friendship of the Indians in Texas, where the town of San Antonio was founded in 1718 by Spain.

At the beginning of the 18th century the country, now known as the United States, was thinly peopled by the "pale-faces"—the Spanish, French, and British colonists—with the Redskins on their hunting-grounds of the West. The French claimed the two great river valleys, the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi. But this great Empire, *New France* as they proudly called it, was very thinly peopled, and most of the settlers were poor. On the other hand, the Spanish had busy mining settlements, and great cattle ranches. Much of the picturesque character of the *American cowboys* dates from the time of the early Spanish settlers.



E.N.A.

The Old Witch House, Salem,  
Massachusetts (Built 1631)  
Salem is one of the oldest Puritan  
settlements in New England

The British colonies in North America had been founded along the east coast. In the Northern group there were compact villages of strict, hard-working Puritans, and comfortable small towns with schools and colleges—the famous *Harvard College* was founded in 1636 in Boston, the capital of Massachusetts. In the Southern group there were large estates—mainly of tobacco—worked by slave labour, and the owners kept

the old style of the Stuart squire, preferring to send their sons to an English University rather than to one of the excellent colleges in the north.

There were now Thirteen British Colonies—a Northern, a Middle and a Southern group—planted between the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the mountains to the west. This territory was nowhere more than three hundred miles in width, often much less. Only one river, the Hudson-Mohawk, pierced the mountain barrier, opening a way to the west. Florida in the south and the Gulf Coast were in the hands of Spain, and the French, as we have seen, claimed the Mississippi Valley.

As the Old World colonised the New World, a vast new trade sprang up in *gold and silver and tobacco and sugar*, while manufactured goods went across the Atlantic from Europe. From the New World came the *potato*, now one of the most nourishing of foods. But modern research seems to prove South America (Peru or Chile) to be the first home of the (wild) potato. The Germans have a monument in Offenburg, Baden, inscribed: "Sir Francis Drake, introducer of the Potato into Europe in the year of the Lord 1580". However, it seems that the Spaniards first gave the potato to Europe, and that North America received the potato—much improved by cultivation—from Europe.

"Virginia" tobacco became famous, and Drake it was who also taught Englishmen to smoke!

Those two other popular products, *tea and coffee*, were brought to Europe, not from the New World, but from the East Indies in the 17th century by the heroic Dutch whose rich East Indian Empire, now three centuries old, the Japanese coveted and attacked in our own days.

## CHAPTER 6

### ( THE FOURTH OF JULY

"The Fourth of July" is the red-letter day in American history—the *birthday* of the nation. Let us try to understand a few of the many reasons why the British colonies freed themselves from the Mother Country.

They enjoyed a larger measure of liberty than any other of the European colonies in America, and until about the middle of the 18th century, they had been fairly satisfied with the way in which they were governed. Each colony had a Royal Governor appointed by the King, and sometimes there were disputes with the Governors. But each largely managed its own affairs, had its own parliaments and made its own laws. The Mother Parliament at Westminster—not yet a democratic Parliament—could and did pass laws which were binding on the colonies. But King, Lords and Commons in London knew very little about conditions in the American colonies three thousand miles away across the ocean. In those days a ship took three months to cross the Atlantic and back again, and such wonders of rapid coming and going as the *Queen Mary*, which easily crosses in five days, and flying, and telegraph cables, and wireless, were of course unknown.

The World War, called The Seven Years' War, had brought to an end the dream of a French Empire both in India and in America. The King of France once described Canada as a "few miles of snow". But in fact Wolfe's victory at Quebec in the memorable year 1759 won for the British Empire what was to become the great and ever loyal *Dominion of Canada*—and it helped also, as we shall see, to bring about the independence of the United States. The wide-spreading territory of Louisiana<sup>1</sup> was from 1763 divided between Britain and Spain with the Mississippi as the boundary. For a short time France held on to New Orleans at the mouth of the river, and then handed it over to Spain.

The war was now over and the Thirteen Colonies were thus freed from the French danger. But still an army had to be kept in North America for the defence of the colonies against any discontented French and possibly Spaniards beyond the Mississippi, and also against the Indian tribes. Some of the King's Ministers in London thought the colonies should help to pay the cost of this

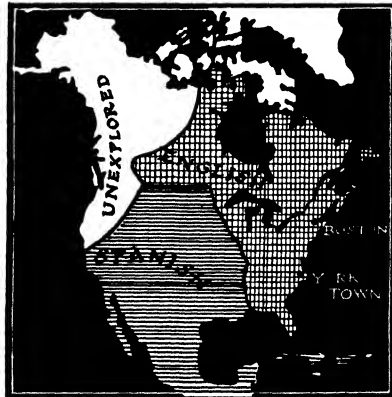
<sup>1</sup>Louisiana ceded by France to Spain in 1763 ; retroceded to France in 1800 ; sold by Napoleon to U.S.A. in 1803 (see chap. 9)

army. Taxes in Britain were already very heavy. There were taxes on window-panes and on cart-wheels. New taxes were now made, and a new Stamp Act ordered the King's subjects, including the colonists, to put stamps on legal documents and newspapers. But this tax (varying from 3d. to £10) had not been voted by the colonial parliaments.

During the war many colonists had made fortunes by supplying the British army with meat and bread. But after the war came a slump. Prices for cattle and corn fell lower and lower. Farmers and labourers found it hard to make a living. Many of the colonial governments were in debt and local taxes were rising rapidly.



North America, 1689



North America, 1763

The new taxes imposed by Britain aroused a storm of anger. *No taxation without representation* was a watch-word of English liberty, and the King's subjects living in America insisted upon it no less than those living at home. But even in England Sir Peter Wentworth had had to remind the Puritan Cromwell that "by the law of the land no money ought to be levied upon the people without their consent in Parliament".<sup>1</sup>

The Stamp Act was the cause of rioting in many towns. The house of one of the governors was sacked and many valuable papers destroyed. Effigies of Crown

<sup>1</sup>A *History of Modern Liberty*, Vol. 4. James Mackinnon (Longmans)

officials were burned in bonfires, and everyone refused to use the stamps. The next year the Act was repealed.

There were other grievances. Britain, like other 18th century colonial powers, "regulated" the trade of the colonies in the supposed interests of the colonies and the home country. Certain colonial produce, including tobacco, could be exported only to Britain. And Britain forbade the colonies to start factories for steel or woollen goods or even hats. Manufactured goods from Europe had to pass through Britain before being sent to America, and this meant that extra customs duties had to be paid on them, and wide-spread *smuggling* was carried on. In 1767, new duties were imposed on tea, glass and paper imported by the colonists, but there was such an outcry that, excepting a small tea tax, they were taken off.

The problem of the cost of Empire Defence was not then and has never yet been fully solved.

Then there was the *Frontier* grievance. No sooner were the French defeated than Britain forbade colonists to cross the mountain barrier to make new homes in the West. This order came at a time when many New England farmers had been forced through bad trade to give up their farms. At the same time, new settlers were continually arriving and the population had doubled in twenty-five years. The only hope for many settlers, old and new, lay in the West, where land could be had free or at little cost.

The colonies also felt they had played an important part in the late wars, at the beginning of which four thousand out of the five thousand troops engaged in America were colonists. It was only natural that they should compare the colonial success at Louisburg (Nova Scotia), where Massachusetts troops captured the fort, with the bad management of some of the British campaigns and the defeat of General Braddock in 1755. On the sea, too, colonial privateer vessels had captured many valuable prizes in the form of enemy ships.

Yet many of the colonists had no wish to go to war with the home country. Some feared that such action would be followed by local civil war, such as raged in

North Carolina from 1769 till 1772. The presence of British troops was, however, very unpopular. The colonists called them *Lobsters* on account of their red coats. One winter's day in Boston, in 1770, a crowd of boys surrounded some British sentries on duty and began to snowball them. This led to a riot, during which a rioter's shout of "Fire!" was mistaken for an officer's order. The troops fired on the crowd and three of the townsfolk were killed. This *Boston Massacre*, as it was called, was greatly magnified in importance by those who wanted to stir up trouble with Britain. Two years later a British ship sent out to watch for smugglers was boarded one night by colonists and set on fire, but the offenders were never punished.

The final trouble came when the British Government tried to make the colonists buy tea on which Parliament had unwisely exercised its right to levy a small tax. The British East India Company tried to land the tea in America, and as the tea was cheap it was hoped the colonists would be pleased. But they saw in it a new trick to make them pay the hated tax, and others were angry because colonial tea merchants were to suffer while a British business concern reaped the benefit.<sup>1</sup>

Every port refused the tea, and when three ships arrived at Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, these were boarded by townsmen disguised as *Mohawk Indians* and armed with hatchets. Three hundred and forty tea chests were broken open and the tea, worth 50,000 dollars (about £10,000), was thrown into the harbour. The British Government replied by closing Boston Harbour to all shipping, and drastically changing the charter of Massachusetts. But the other colonies supported the rebel colony, and because of the "awful solemnity" of the crisis, the *first American Congress* (or parliament) was called to meet at Philadelphia. All the colonies except Georgia sent representatives. Next year the Congress assumed sovereign power.

At the time of this American Revolution the colonists numbered about 4,000,000, and included not only

<sup>1</sup>See *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, Vol. I

Puritan Englishmen who still cherished the ideals of the Cromwellian age, but Protestant Ulstermen, Catholic Irish, and Scottish Highlanders, as well as refugees from Austria and Germany. But by no means all the British colonists wished to free themselves from the Mother Country. "The English have always quarrelled over money . . . . It was an English issue, dividing men of English race on either side of the Atlantic. America had its Tories or Loyalists; England its Americans or Whigs". Among the latter were the three greatest British statesmen of the time, Chatham, Burke, and Fox; and many of the British middle class had no wish to coerce their kinsmen across the ocean. Indeed it came to being a sort of civil war in England and "the contest was essentially a civil war in all the colonies".<sup>1</sup>

The first skirmish—"the shot heard round the world"—between colonial and British troops took place in 1775 at Lexington.<sup>2</sup> The colonists seized Bunker's Hill overlooking the city of Boston from which they were driven by the regular troops, but by the end of the year they occupied Dorchester Heights, also overlooking Boston, and began to bombard the city. A colonial force invaded Canada, but without success.

In the spring of 1776—a year ever memorable in American and world history—more British troops arrived. But Sir William Howe had been forced to withdraw his men from Boston and take them by sea to Halifax in Nova Scotia. In April, Congress felt that the American people's desire to be free from British rule was strong enough to justify two important steps. A committee began to discuss a *Declaration of Independence*, drafted by Thomas Jefferson assisted by another great statesman, Benjamin Franklin. Meanwhile the ports of the country were thrown open to ships of all nations—a defiance of the Navigation Laws—in order that the colonies might obtain from abroad arms and munitions which till then had been smuggled in by foreign *gun-runners*.

<sup>1</sup>See *Select Bibliography of History of U.S.A.* (Professor Nevins for the Historical Association)

<sup>2</sup>For *Paul Revere's Ride* before Lexington, read Longfellow's poem

On July 2nd Congress voted in favour of seceding from the British Empire. Then, on *The Fourth of July*, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was issued: "We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, *free and independent States*; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connexion between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, dissolved."

Note "*free and independent States*"—not a "*free and independent Nation*"—this was important when Civil War between North and South broke out and the South wanted to separate from the North. (see Ch. 14.)

The Declaration opened with the famous challenge that has become *the gospel of all free men for all time*:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it."

"It was a new thing in human history that a great State should thus choose as the motto of the first chapter of its history a proclamation of *universal human rights*".<sup>1</sup>

It was for these human rights that Americans began fighting in 1941 as in 1776.

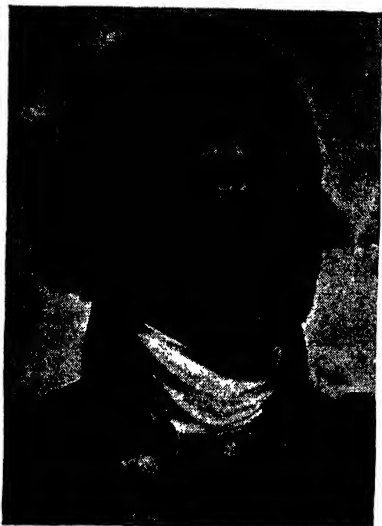
## CHAPTER 7

### THE MAKING OF THE "UNITED" STATES

I. When the Thirteen Colonies decided to fight for their freedom, they found in *George Washington* a wise and eminent leader. His ancestors had lived as squires

<sup>1</sup>Ramsay Muir: *Civilisation and Liberty* (Jonathan Cape)

in their Tudor home, Sulgrave Manor, Northants, and from there in Cromwell's time John Washington had emigrated to America and settled in the colony of Virginia.



E.N.A.

George Washington (1732-1797)

George Washington, his great grandson, was born in 1732, on his father's estate of *Mount Vernon* on the southern bank of the Potomac River in Virginia. Schools were few in the southern colonies, and George received very little real education. As a boy he spent his time in hunting, shooting and fishing, and helping his father on the plantation where tobacco was the chief crop. But he taught himself mathematics and land-surveying. On the wild Virginian borderland he grew up tall and strong, and at the age of sixteen became land surveyor on the estate of Lord Fairfax. By that time his father had died, leaving most of his property to two elder sons, Lawrence and Augustine. Lawrence was appointed guardian to his younger brother, and took George on a trip to the West Indies. That was the only journey George Washington ever made outside his own country, and it was in the West Indies that he fell ill of smallpox, the scars of which he bore to the end of his life.

When George was twenty years of age, his brother Lawrence died, and left him the fine estate of Mount Vernon. The young squire intended to settle down as a country gentleman, but his tall, powerful figure attracted the attention of the new Lieutenant-Governor, Dinwiddie, who appointed him colonel and commander-in-chief of the Virginian militia with the duty of defending some three hundred miles of frontier from Indian attacks.

Soon Washington had to fight other enemies, for the French were pushing their way into the Ohio country, and when war broke out between Britain and France the Virginians had more than one encounter with the French. The combined attacks of *French and Indians* became so serious in 1755 that troops were sent from England to help the colonials. The English commander, General Braddock, knew nothing about the country, and paid no heed to warnings given him by Washington who had known the woods from childhood. The result



Mount Vernon—Home of Washington

was an ambush, and a forest battle in which General Braddock was fatally wounded, and half his men killed. Washington had several horses shot under him, yet

he managed to bring the little remnant of his Virginians out of action in fair order.

Soon after this, Washington retired from military service. He married a wealthy widow and the union of their two estates made him one of the richest men in Virginia. For nearly twenty years he lived quietly at Mount Vernon, making a special study of new methods of cultivating tobacco. Then came the raid on the tea-ships and the approach of war with Britain. In 1774, he was one of the Virginian delegates at the *first American Congress*, and in June, 1775, he was elected to command the united forces of the Thirteen Colonies. He refused to take any pay, saying he accepted it as a duty "at the expense of my domestic happiness".

Washington had to create an army before he could command it. There was no lack of volunteers, but the men had neither uniforms nor munitions. Washington's first soldiers wore hunting shirts, so that the men of the different colonies might be dressed as nearly alike as

possible. Every town set to work to make or collect gunpowder, and for a time Washington had to avoid unnecessary use of powder and shot. At the end of 1775 he occupied Dorchester Heights and began the bombardment which drove the British troops out of Boston.

The winter of 1777-8 was very severe and caused great suffering among Washington's men who had their headquarters at *Valley Forge* in Pennsylvania. The departments supplying the army with stores were very badly managed. The men were half-starved; their clothes were in rags; some had not even a part of a shirt. Many



*Wide World Photos*

Reproduction of a painting of Washington's troops  
which hangs in one of the rooms at Valley Forge

were without boots, and their cut and bleeding feet left red prints when they marched over the snowy ground. Even in those dark days Washington did not give up hope. He may not have been a great military commander, but he was a very great man, and his strength and courage kept his army together.

The war dragged on. The team work of the British generals was bad. General Burgoyne was surrounded at Saratoga in 1777 and forced to surrender. This British reverse greatly pleased the French (still smarting under the loss of Canada), and they now decided to help the colonists, whose envoy in Paris was the famous statesman

and scientist, *Benjamin Franklin*. At first, French help was given on the sea, hindering British vessels, and molesting lines of communication. A daring American, Paul Jones, attacked British coasts and even landed in Cumberland. Then Spain joined France against Britain, and a league of northern powers also made ready to attack the British navy if it interfered with neutral trade at sea. *It was a grave hour for Britain.*



Benjamin Franklin

During the crisis eight British islands in the West Indies, and Minorca in the Mediterranean, were lost; Gibraltar was besieged; and Britain had to fight not only in America and on the Seven Seas but also in Ceylon, in India, and in Sumatra. It reminds us of the critical months of 1942.

England had never been in greater danger. For one moment she had lost *command of the sea*. Europe thought that her sun had set for ever. She stood

alone in the world—then as in 1940. “Alone” as in 1940? No indeed, for in 1940 she had with her her loyal, devoted fellow-citizens in the Dominions.

In 1780 a new British commander arrived in America, and won several successes in the south. The next year he moved northward into Virginia, making Yorktown his headquarters. Just at that moment six thousand well-trained French soldiers under Lafayette set foot in America and joined Washington, and the combined armies laid siege to Yorktown (1781) on land while a French fleet blockaded the town from the sea. Cornwallis found himself cut off from all help and surrounded by an army twice as great as his own. He held out for three weeks and then surrendered. “*It’s all over! It’s all over!*” cried the British Prime Minister in dismay.

The next year British command of the sea was restored by Rodney's naval victory in the West Indies and Elliott's three years' defence of Gibraltar. In the Peace Treaty (1783) signed in Paris, Britain recognised the freedom of the Thirteen Colonies. But much remained to be done before the *Thirteen States* could make a real national government and weld themselves into a "nation". The revolution had brought independence but not yet unity. And "the misfortune was, not so much that independence came, as that it came in the way it did . . . . Coming as the result of a war it left bitter memories behind, which poisoned the relations of the peoples for generations thereafter."<sup>1</sup> The Americans and French have been friends ever since. In 1789 the French rose against their rulers.

Washington resigned his command at the end of the war, "happy", as he told Congress, "in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty". He returned to his Mount Vernon home, and set to work to repair the damage of the seven years of war and to make experiments in tree-planting. He still kept in touch with the affairs of the new nation and received letters from many leading men. What he heard did not please him. "Our character as a nation is dwindling", he wrote, "and what it must come to if a change does not soon take place our enemies have foretold, for in truth we seem either not capable, or not willing, to take care of ourselves".

After four years Washington returned to public affairs. He was one of the Virginian delegates to the Federal Convention, a meeting of all the States which assembled on 14th May, 1787, at Philadelphia, to draw up the



E.N.A.  
Independence Hall, Philadelphia  
It was here that the American Declaration  
of Independence was signed on July 4th, 1776

<sup>1</sup>Bryce: *The Study of American History* (1921)

*Constitution* or plan by which the new nation was to be governed.

II. The Americans had now to do what the English nation has never had to do. They had the difficult task of making once and for all and writing out a Constitution or plan of government. "The British Constitution—there isn't one" (on paper). Our plan of government grew slowly through the ages. It was never written down in a single document, though some important charters were drawn up at critical times—Magna Carta, Petition of Right, Bill of Rights.



Washington addressing the  
Federal Convention at  
Philadelphia, May, 1787

E.N.A.

The Americans declared their independence in 1776. During the war, Congress adopted a plan of union called the "Articles of Confederation". These gave much power to each of the States but little to the central government, which was without a head or president and could not make laws nor tax the people for *national* purposes. There were many disputes about trade boundaries, and some of the States nearly went to war among themselves.

The task now was to make the new nation into a strong Federal State, that is, a *brotherhood of states* united for national purposes but independent for local State affairs. The special meeting of the States, called the Federal Convention, achieved this; it was held at Philadelphia in the year 1787 and was attended by fifty-five delegates chosen by the people. Washington was elected President and there were present other of the country's greatest men—Benjamin Franklin for Pennsylvania, James Maddison for Virginia, and for New York, Alexander Hamilton and Isaac *Roosevelt*, great-great-grandfather of the present great President.

The meetings were held in secret. The delegates knew

that the central government had not enough power, but they feared to give it too much and were jealous for their own rights—had they not indeed revolted against the oppressive George III whose mother (a German) used to say to him: "George, when you reign, *be King!*"

After four months of somewhat stormy debate, the Constitution was written down, signed by thirty-nine of the delegates, and sent to Congress at New York to get it ratified in and by each State. This was a hard task, but it was helped by Article IV of the Constitution which allowed for "Amendments" to be made when necessary in future years. It was ratified first of all by the State of Delaware, and slowly by other States, but North Carolina did not join the Union till 1789 nor Rhode Island till 1790.

When the first President was to be elected, it was said that the office had been "cut to the measure of George Washington", and no one thought of any other person for it.

*What does this written Constitution do for the American nation?* First, it gives the nation a strong head, the *President*, who is Commander-in-chief and Prime Minister as well as Chief of the State. The President is elected for a term of four years, and he can choose the Supreme Court Judges, and what we call the Civil Service, and he can appoint any ministers he pleases to form his Cabinet—whereas our Prime Minister chooses his Cabinet from the party which has a majority in the House of Commons. Yet in reality the Congress is master, for it has to pass all laws and confirm all treaties.

Second, it provides for a *Congress* to consist of *two Houses*—an upper House or Senate, and a lower House, the House of Representatives, and both Houses are elected by the people. In the upper House, each State has two Senators, whether its population is small or great; but in the lower House, the number of Members for each State depends upon the size of its population (and this varied and still varies greatly between State and State). Today there are 96 Senators and 435 Members.

Third, it gives the new nation a *Supreme Court*, with local courts (as in England) in every part of the country, so that quarrels between States, and between citizens of different States, can be settled in a seemly way. And to avoid the rule of dictators—as they thought King George III and his ministers had been—they arranged for President, Congress, and Supreme Court to act as checks on one another and so preserve a balance of powers.

In this way the American nation became a close Union of States—the *United States*. Each State manages its own local internal affairs in its own parliament, but the 48 States are united in one strong national government to guard the general interests of the nation, such as making war and peace and treaties, coining money, regulating commerce, and so on.

The American Constitution is perhaps the finest example in history of a free government for a free people, a *model for freedom* and democracy everywhere—the greatest possible contrast with the Fascist States of Mussolini and Hitler. Upon this American model are based the federal governments of Canada, Australia, South Africa (in a lesser degree), Switzerland, and the South American republics.

Two main parties as in England, came into being: the Federalists (anxious for a strong national government) and the Anti-Federalists. Later, about the time of the American Civil War, there were the *Republicans* who stood for a strong Union or “Republic”, and the *Democrats*, strongest in the South and keeping a keen eye on State interests.

George Washington served two four-year terms as Head of the new nation. As a *President of a Republic* was a new thing, not only for America, but for the world, Washington felt it was his duty to give the office proper dignity. He drove in a coach with outriders in brilliant livery. He received his guests at public functions wearing a black velvet suit, gold-buckled shoes, and a sword. He refused to serve a third term. In a farewell speech in 1797, he pleaded with his country to keep out of

European quarrels, and this "isolation" became the keynote of America's foreign policy.

Two years later, in 1799, the great President died at Mount Vernon—"first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen"—and his home is now preserved as a national memorial. By his will all the slaves on his estate were to be freed after his widow's death.

His wise guidance and powerful influence alone saved the new young nation from disaster in its early days, and gave it the start which enabled the "*Sons of Liberty*" in our own days to revisit and help to save the troubled Old World that gave them birth.

On the banks of the Potomac, within a few miles of Washington's home and birthplace, a site was chosen in 1790 for a new Federal *Capital*. Washington took great interest in the plans for the city which now bears his name, and in 1793, he laid the corner stone of the Capitol, the splendid building in which the Congress was to meet. The government was transferred there from Philadelphia in 1800, the year after George Washington's death.

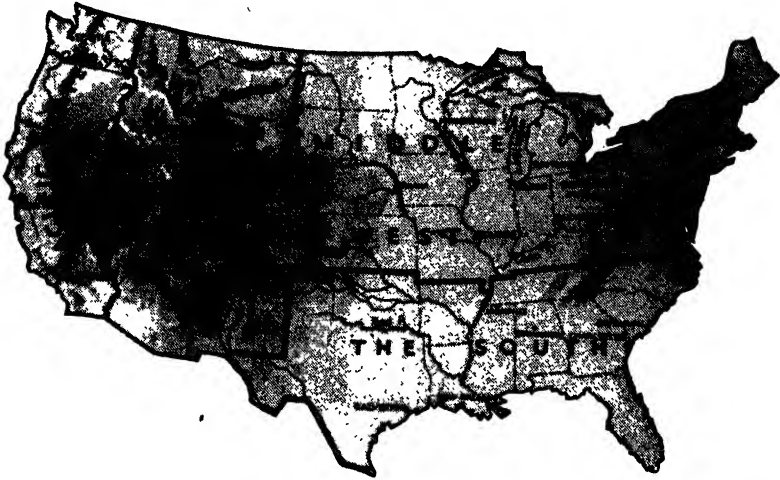
## CHAPTER 8

"TO THE WEST, TO THE WEST, THE LAND OF THE FREE"

After the War of Independence there was a great deal of movement in the land. A large number of colonists, known as the *United Empire Loyalists*, had never been in favour of the colonies cutting themselves off from the Mother Land. When the United States became a free and independent nation, these Loyalists preferred to leave their lands and property and to find new homes elsewhere under the British Flag.

Canada, Britain's latest colony, had remained loyal to Britain, and neither persuasion nor force had made her change her mind. In Canada there were vast unoccupied areas, and so the Loyalists moved northwards. No less than 60,000 of them crossed the border; many settled in Upper Canada which at that time was almost uninhabited; others founded the colony of New Brunswick.

There was also a westward movement in the United States itself. As soon as independence was won, the Americans were, of course, freed from the British order to keep to the east of the mountains. Even before the war a few daring pioneers had defied the British order and little bands had crossed the ranges to "the West". But five years after peace was signed, nearly a thousand boats carried 18,000 men, women and children down



Regions of U.S.A.

Ministry of Information

the Ohio River to make new homes in the West, and soon there were 170,000 pioneers in that "*Land of the Free*". Kentucky (an Indian name) was an ancient Indian hunting-ground, and by about 1800 Kentucky and Tennessee, and then Indiana, Illinois and Missouri had grown to be States of the Union.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the Ohio country was raising crops for export, and building vessels to trade with Europe by way of the Mississippi and its tributaries. One day in 1803, the customs officials at Liverpool were puzzled by the arrival of a ship, the "Duane" from *Pittsburgh*, a place which they had forgotten, though it began as an English fort half a century earlier and was named after the Elder Pitt—today it is "the Iron City", where they even make submarines which the Mississippi carries to the ocean. Soon another ship, the

"Louisiana", was trading with Italy and England from the small and oldest Ohio town of Marietta as her home port.

During the Napoleonic War, the United States and Britain were again at war for two years, and it is interesting to note that about this time the American author, John Howard Payne—the author of *Home, Sweet Home*—was visiting England. After that unhappy interval of war, the eastern States were once more swept by *Ohio fever*—a great desire to cross the mountains and travel down the Ohio to the West, ever the "most democratic part of America"—

"To the West, to the West, to the land of the free,  
Where the mighty Missouri rolls down to the sea;  
Where a man is a man if he's willing to toil,  
And the humblest may reap the fruits of the soil."

The townsfolk at Pittsburgh watched the rafts or flatboats float past, carrying horses, dogs, cows, pigs and poultry as well as the settlers themselves and their household goods. Each raft was 80 or 90 feet long, and had a little house erected on it; each had its stack of hay for the animals, and the ploughs and wagons were piled up. By 1820, two and a half million people, a quarter of the whole population of the United States, were living beyond the eastern mountains, toiling to make homes and a livelihood in the backwoods. Some of the pioneers or frontiersmen seemed to enjoy hardship and privation, for as soon as they had secured a bit of comfort they talked about selling their "improvements" and moving on again, often making several moves before finally settling down.

Some of the folk moving westward from the Southern States were very poor. We read of one family with a wagon but no horse. The father and son toiled in the shafts, while the women took it by turn to ride while the others trudged along carrying rifles and driving a cow.

Life on the *Frontier* was hard and lonely. One traveller tells of settlers who had to take their bread-corn to be ground at a mill thirty miles away, the journey taking three days each way. In the West, "Indian alarms were as frequent as fires in Boston". This is not surprising, for as the Frontier was pushed farther and farther west-

ward by each successive wave of settlers, the white men were encroaching more and more on the *Indian hunting-grounds* where the tribes had wandered freely generation after generation through the ages.

Among the frontiersmen on the pioneering fringe of Kentucky there lived, in the early part of the 19th century, a man named Thomas Lincoln. His ancestors had emigrated from Norfolk to America in the reign of Charles I when so many left England for a New World. Thomas



Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.

Life on the Frontier

Lincoln and his wife and two children made their home in a *log cabin* and after a time moved northward into Indiana. They then lived in a wooden house in the midst of a forest of walnut, beech and maple trees. The house was only eighteen feet square, and the boy, whose name was *Abraham*, slept in a tiny loft in the angle of the roof, to which he climbed by a "stairway" of wooden pegs driven into chinks in the wall. In winter the snow often drifted through cracks in the roof on to the boy's bed. Abraham and his father wore suits made from

deerskin, and rough cowhide shoes, and fur caps, for the animals which the father and mother managed to shoot had to provide clothing as well as food. For buttons the family used bits of bone, and long thorns served as pins.

*Abraham Lincoln* had little schooling. His mother taught him his ABC, and after she died a boy cousin helped him to learn reading and writing. And for books he read over and over again the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Aesop's Fables*, and the *Life of Washington*. The boys used the point of a burnt stick for a pencil, and wrote on the wooden boards, or with bits of chalk on the one and only spade. When they found some paper, the elder boy cut Abraham's first pen from a turkey quill and made ink from blackberry roots. Years afterwards, Abraham Lincoln, the backwoods boy, became President of the United States (see Ch. 14), and he never forgot the "common people" amongst whom he had lived.

In the early days the pioneers were farmers and cattlemen, seeking a living from the soil. But other men pushed westwards hoping to make a fortune in other ways. Some were traders, others were miners seeking wealth which they believed to be hidden beneath the earth—gold and silver, lead and copper, and later still the iron to provide the steel needed by modern industry.

And so the Westerners, those "hustlers" on their way across the vast prairies, from the Appalachians and Alleghanies to the Rockies, hearkened to the words of the American poet Lowell:

Be broad-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,  
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs.

"The expansion westward and the problems of the frontier, and the life on it, make up a story rich in human values . . . . but these incidents also . . . . afford an admirable illustration of the way in which people of different nationalities have achieved the supreme example of *the art of living together*."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>From *Teaching American History*, in the *Times Educational Supplement*, Aug. 16, 1941

## CHAPTER 9

THE STORY OF "OL' MAN RIVER" (*continued*)

The Indians rightly named the great river of the United States the "Mississippi"—which means "the father of waters". It is the "Ol' Man River" of the popular song, the river that just "keeps rollin' along". With its chief tributary, the Missouri, it is the longest river in the world (4221 miles), and with its tributaries it drains an area of 1,280,000 square miles.

In early days this vast valley was the central highway of North America. Early French settlers made a little trading station at the point where the Missouri joins the main stream. They called the settlement *St. Louis* and it grew into an important river-town. It is now the sixth city in the United States.

At first the traffic on the river was carried on by barges or flatboats, which like the lumber rafts could be easily floated down stream. The strong current, however, made the return journey upstream very difficult, but there was no other way (except over the mountains) by which two million pioneers could obtain tools, manufactured goods and books. So the Mississippi became the great highway on which the settlers met and mingled and talked over their hardships and their debts.

But life on the River had other dangers besides the strong current and sometimes disastrous floods. The river-towns were haunted by robber gangs and wreckers, wild picturesque characters whose very names were as great a terror as those of dreaded Indian war-chiefs. They lurked on islands in the river, or galloped along the banks on the watch for likely prey in the shape of well laden flatboats. They turned river-side caves into fortresses and many a grim fight took place, of which "Ol' Man River" alone knew the full story.

The River was of increasing value as settlers increased and were anxious to find markets for their goods, for railways were as yet unknown. In the year 1800 a rumour spread along the River that Spain had ceded *Louisiana* territory, including the port of New Orleans,

to France. Would *Napoleon*, now rising to supreme power, try to strangle his enemies' energy and enterprise by closing the River to European produce? For two years France denied any such arrangement with Spain, but in 1802 she was ready to acknowledge it, and the French agent in New Orleans closed the River to American commerce.

There was neither telegraph nor telephone nor wireless in those days, but the news flew like wild-fire along the River. It leaped from flatboat to flatboat; it passed from river-town to river-town. Swift messengers dashed off overland to carry the news to *President Thomas Jefferson* at the White House in Washington. Jefferson wasted no time. Having obtained from Congress a grant of a million dollars, for expenses connected with foreign affairs, he sent a messenger to Paris, carrying instructions to the American Minister in that city. He was to buy New Orleans and the Floridas from France; or buy the "island" of New Orleans alone. If both these offers failed, he must buy the right of navigation on the Mississippi.

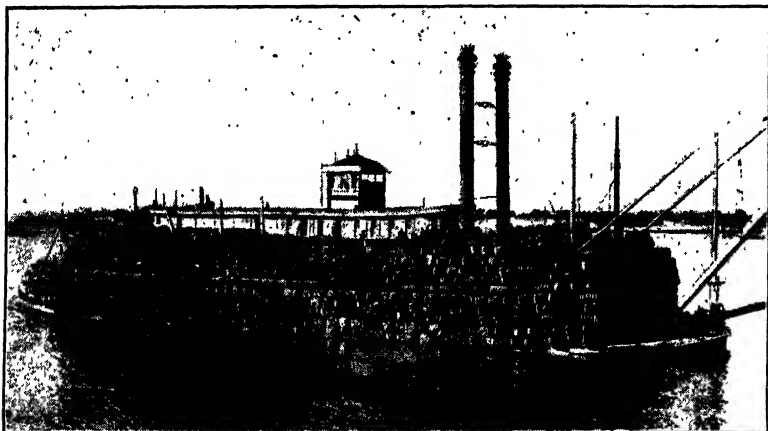
At that time Napoleon was planning an attack on England and needed money. The territory on the other side of the Atlantic just acquired from Spain seemed of far less value than ready money to carry on the conquest of Europe, and so Napoleon made the American Minister an unexpected offer. He would sell the whole of Louisiana to the United States! In a few weeks, terms were arranged, and the United States secured in 1803 for fifteen million dollars the vast lands from the east bank of the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, and from the Canadian border to Northern Texas.

In this way *Thomas Jefferson* gave the Great Valley of "Ol' Man River" to the United States and so at one stride doubled its size. Thomas Jefferson had done other services, as the inscription on his gravestone tells us:—

Here was buried Thomas Jefferson  
Author of the Declaration of Independence  
Of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom  
And of the University of Virginia.

By a stroke of the pen the Mississippi became the centre of the American State instead of the Frontier. The wide lands of the West gave new opportunities for a rapidly growing population, and "Ol' Man River" became a cord of unity between the East and the ever-receding Frontier of the West.

Then another great event took place. The steamboat had been invented by the American, Fulton, and the difficulty of the up-stream journey vanished. The *first*



A Mississippi Steamboat

*Mississippi steamboat* was launched from a Pittsburgh yard in 1810. Having made the journey down to New Orleans, it was turned northward, breasted the current and steamed up the River, proving that it could bring goods upstream as easily as carry them down.

However, the old flatboats continued to be used for many years. One traveller noted two thousand of them in a twenty-five day trip in 1816 ; but this was a one-way traffic. Steamboats multiplied, and in thirty years there was a greater tonnage of shipping on the River than on the whole of the Atlantic seaboard, and *New Orleans* had twice as much shipping as New York, at that time the busiest Atlantic port. Later the railways captured much of the transport, and river traffic, although still important, decreased. Many busy cities and towns have grown up on the banks of "the father of waters."

One of the Mississippi pilots was Samuel L. Clemens who afterwards became one of America's most famous authors. He took as his pen-name *Mark Twain* which was the pilot's call in taking soundings, and in his book, *Life on the Mississippi*, he describes the River and its voyagers.

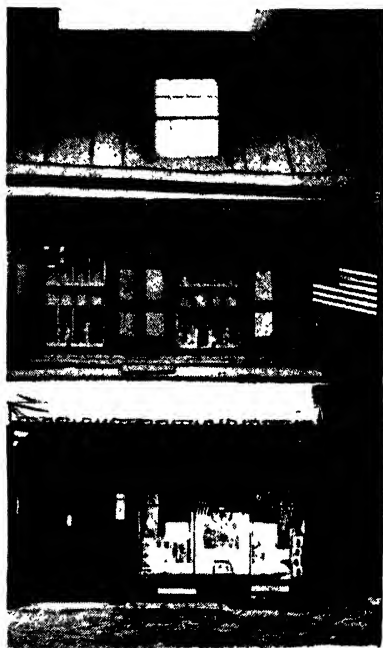
## CHAPTER 10

### "THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER IN TRIUMPH SHALL WAVE"

The national flag of the United States is known as *The Stars and Stripes*. Three-quarters of the bunting consists of red and white stripes—thirteen stripes, one for each of the British Colonies, which in 1776 issued the Declaration of Independence that made them a nation. The upper, inner quarter has a blue ground on which are white stars. A new star was added for every State which was admitted to the Union, and there are now forty-eight stars. The last stars were added in 1912 for the new States of Arizona and New Mexico.

The national anthem of America is a song in honour of the flag and is called *The Star-Spangled Banner*. It was written by a young American poet, Francis Scott Key, during the unfortunate war between the United States and Britain in 1812-14.

At that time Britain was fighting Napoleon, who hoped that "if he found it impossible to strike this enemy at the heart, he could cut off the supplies to the stomach" (which was what Hitler also hoped to do!).



E.N.A.

The Betsy Ross House in Arch Street,  
Philadelphia, birthplace of  
America's first flag

British trade, said Napoleon, could be "repelled by all Europe from the Sound to the Hellespont". British life and its very survival depended on Britain's ships and sailors, and in those days the sailors were badly fed and badly paid, and it is not surprising they sometimes deserted.

It was a very difficult time for neutral countries, such as America, during that Napoleonic War. The French might seize a neutral ship if it was sailing to or from a British port, and if it was not, the British might seize it. The British did stop and search American merchantmen—for the British claimed the "right of search"—and once they boarded an American war vessel to search for British deserters. In 1807 the British warship "Leopard" had fired for fifteen minutes into the American warship "Chesapeake" and had taken off four men. Sometimes unwise British officers even carried off American seamen to serve in British men-of-war.

All this raised a storm of indignation in the United States. Many of the younger Members of Congress came from the new Western States, and these *war hawks* were eager for another conflict with Britain. They demanded "sailors' rights," and they boasted that Canada could be conquered in six weeks.

The American attack on Canada failed, but their defence of New Orleans was a brilliant success. The British captured Washington, the new U.S. capital, and they disgraced themselves by wantonly burning public buildings as well as the President's house—which was in future known as *The White House*, because its walls when repaired were painted white. On the sea the Americans won successes and captured five hundred British merchant ships in seven months.

But the war brought little gain or glory to either side. The Americans, however, earned a greater measure of respect from the British, and they now felt quite independent of Europe. Their future lay in the West, and for many years they managed to keep themselves free from the affairs of the Old World as George Washington had advised.

The British had attempted without success to capture the port of Baltimore, and it was during this attack that the American national anthem was written. Francis Scott Key was present when for a day and a night the British warships and Fort McHenry bombarded each other. Key was sent to the British admiral under a flag of truce to secure the parole of a friend. The admiral detained him through the night. From the deck of a British warship Key watched the fight.



The President's Official Home, The White House,  
Washington

When the flashes of the guns lit up the darkness, he strained his eyes to see if the flag was still flying over the fort: "Oh, say, does the star-spangled banner still wave?" was the question he was asking throughout the night. When the dawn came, he saw the *Stars and Stripes* still floating bravely—Fort McHenry had not surrendered. Then Key poured out his joy and the verses were set to music, and at once became the National Anthem of the people of the United States.

#### THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Oh! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming.  
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.  
Oh! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave,  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,  
 Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
 What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,  
 As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses ?  
 Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
 In full glory reflected, now shines in the stream.  
 'Tis the star-spangled banner ! Oh long may it wave,  
 O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave !

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,  
 'Mid the havoc of war, and the battle's confusion,  
 A home and a country they'd leave us no more ?  
 Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.  
 No refuge could save the hireling and slave,  
 From the terror of fight, or the gloom of the grave.  
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave,  
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave !

Oh, thus be it ever when free men shall stand  
 Between their loved homes and the war's desolation ;  
 Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heaven-rescued land  
 Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.  
 Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,  
 And this be our motto, "In God is our trust".  
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave,  
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave !

## CHAPTER 11

### OLD INDIAN TRAILS AND NEW TRANSPORT

Nearly all through the 19th century the pioneers were pushing farther and farther to the West. The Industrial Revolution—with its *machines and factories*—was making life very hard for some people both in New England and the Middle Atlantic States. Factories and towns were taking the place of farms and villages, and in farming itself there were many changes. Land was being enclosed and drained and new machines were coming into use. Many poorer farmers, who could not afford these improvements, had to give up their little farms and seek a livelihood elsewhere.

At times of unrest in Europe, great numbers of German and other emigrants sailed to America, which seemed to them and many others the land of promise. Thousands of *Irishmen* crossed the ocean, hoping for better times, but looking back sorrowfully to catch a last glimpse of

their beloved island as the ship bore them away from her shores:

“They say there’s bread and work for all,  
And the sun shines always there,  
But I’ll ne’er forget old Ireland,  
Be it a thousand times as fair.”

Covered *wagons* rolled over the great plains of the Middle West. Under the canvas tops were packed the household goods of the settlers, while the women and children squeezed themselves in between mattresses and bundles, kettles and pans. Behind the wagons came the cattle in charge of the boys. In little parties of twos and



How the Pioneers camped in their Wagon Trains *World Wide Photos*

threes, or in long straggling dozens, the wagons carried the pioneers westward, seeking a suitable place to make a new home.

At sunset the weary horses or bullocks were released from the shafts, and the travellers camped for the night. When a final halt was made, some trees were felled, a log cabin or two built, and a start made with a bit of rough farming. Sometimes the site proved a bad one, for lack of good drinking-water or other reasons; then the stakes were pulled up, the wagon was re-packed and the *pioneers* moved a hundred miles or so farther on.

These brave pioneers needed almost the same hopeful patience and courage as the earliest colonists who crossed the ocean to settle in a strange New World.

Ever westward rolled the wagons, following the old *Indian trails*. Some carried settlers. Others carried adventurous hunters and traders. Then in 1830 the first covered wagon crossed the Rocky Mountains. On and on to the north-west they went following one of the most famous of the centuries-old Indian paths known as the *Oregon Trail* (see picture, p. 7). Its starting-point, on the Mississippi, north of St. Louis, was the most westerly trading depot, called Independence. Then the trail crossed prairie and desert, mountains and rivers until it reached the extreme north-west. It was a perilous journey. Sandstorms had to be faced; swift-running rivers must be crossed. The Red Indians might swoop down on the wagons, or the travellers might find themselves in the path of a herd of stampeding buffalo charging madly forward.

Another trail, leading south-west to Santa Fé, in the Spanish settlement of New Mexico, was a traders' trail. The first American traders who drove their wagons over the plains to Santa Fé in 1821 found a ready market for their goods. The Spaniards had money but little opportunity of spending it, since they were 1500 miles from the Mexican port of Vera Cruz. After that the traders set out each spring, and travelled in company for safety over the plains to Santa Fé. When they reached the borders of *New Mexico*, there was a grand rush to see which driver would be the first to cross. Like the northern trail it was open to Indian attacks until the United States government came to the aid of the traders, and set up a fort from which some troops marched with the wagons as far as the Mexican border, and waited by the Arkansas River until the traders returned in the autumn. After two or three years, however, the Indians left the traders alone, and they were able to travel without military escort.

In Britain about the time of the battle of Waterloo in 1815, MacAdam, the Scot, was showing how good roads (like the old Roman roads) could be made with crushed

stone, roads that did not become inches deep in mud and full of holes during winter. A few years later, the knowledge of this new *road-engineering* reached America, and a fine road, known as the Cumberland Road, was made at the expense of the Government. It followed an old Indian trail from Pennsylvania into Virginia.

With the increase of settlers in the West, there was a growing need for a cheaper method of transport. The Mississippi was a splendid commercial waterway to the



Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.

An Indian Attack

south, but it did not help the trade between east and west. The Cumberland and other new roads were useful links, but they did not lessen the cost of carrying goods. In the early 19th century it cost 125 dollars (£25) to carry a ton of goods by wagon from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, a distance of 250 miles; and 100 dollars to carry the same weight from Buffalo to New York. Some new kind of transport must be found.

*Canals* were talked about and laughed at, but on the Fourth of July, 1817, Governor De Witt Clinton of New

York dug a shovelful of earth which marked the beginning of the Erie Canal, from Albany on the River Hudson to Buffalo on Lake Erie, a distance of 363 miles. The work took eight years to complete, and cost 7,000,000 dollars, but this was more than repaid by the tolls collected in the first ten years after its opening.

The new waterway was of immense value, especially to the *grain merchants*. The cost of carrying corn from Buffalo to New York was reduced from 100 dollars a ton to 5 dollars, and the journey was made in six days instead of twenty. In one month of the first year, over eight hundred barges left Albany for Buffalo. From Buffalo there was the great waterway of the Lakes, and from Albany the barges went on to New York where the cargoes could be shipped by sea to the Southern States or across the ocean to the Old World.

Not only had a great gateway been opened for western farm produce to travel eastward, and eastern manufactured goods to pass to customers in the west, but *New York* became the "front door" through which foreign trade on the Atlantic coast passed. Boston, 200 miles overland from Albany, lost some of its former importance, while in New York the value of property was nearly doubled in the ten years from 1820 to 1830. The Northern States greatly benefited by the canal, and became more and more a manufacturing region, depending on the west for their corn supplies.

Other towns, including Philadelphia and Baltimore, finding their trade decreasing, talked of rival canals, but there was no other gateway through the mountain barrier equal to that of the Mohawk-Hudson Valley. New York became and remained supreme, and the Erie canal, which has been deepened and improved of late years, is still the main route by which the *grain and flour* from the west reaches New York on their way to the peoples of Europe.

## CHAPTER 12

## TO THE PACIFIC IN A GOLD RUSH

The "Frontier" of the United States was, we have seen, being pushed farther and farther westward. The covered wagons, or *prairie schooners* as they were called, had travelled over the plains and through the passes of the Rockies to the distant territory of Oregon in the north-west. At that time Oregon extended as far north as *latitude*  $54^{\circ} 40'$ , and the whole of it was claimed by Britain as well as by the United States, for settlers and fur-traders of both nations had found their way into that region.

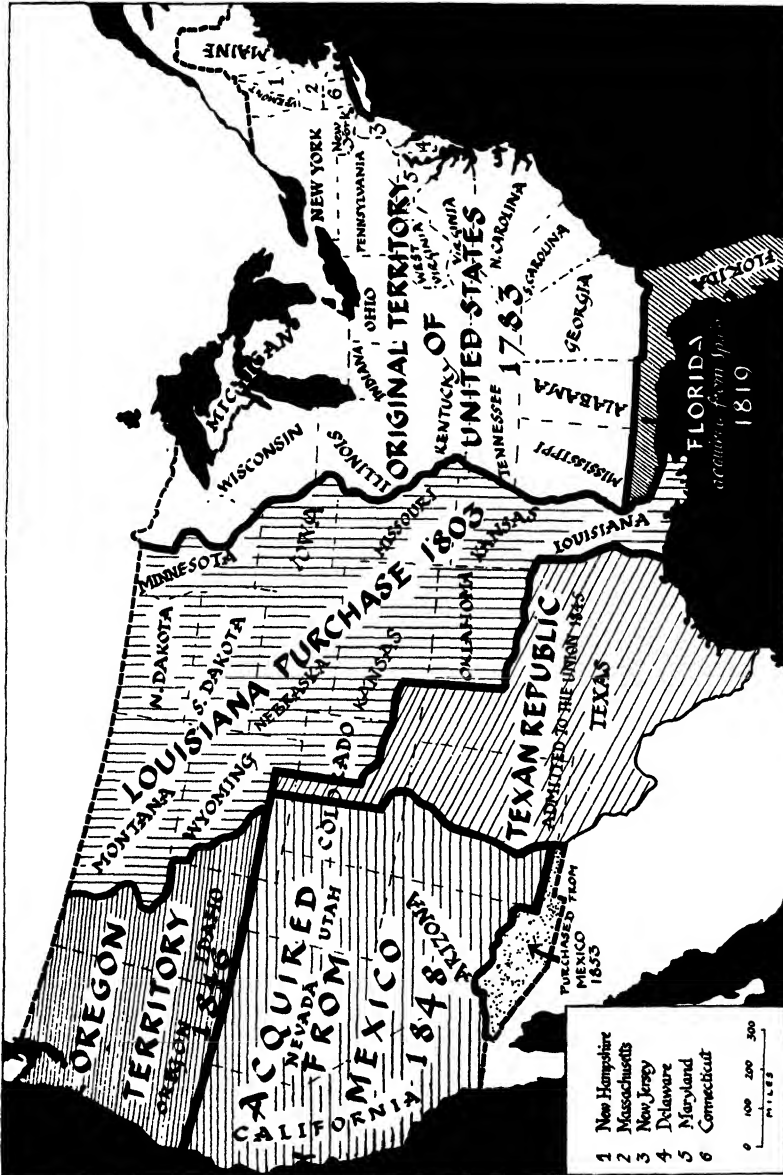
To the south of Oregon was *California*. The name, given to this territory by the 16th century Spanish explorers, was taken from a Spanish romance which was very popular at the time, in which the author told of "the great island of California where a great abundance of gold and precious stones is found". Three hundred years later gold was found in the real California. This territory was and is divided into two parts, Upper and Lower, the latter being the long, narrow peninsula which extends southwards. California had been settled by Spanish Jesuits at the close of the 17th century (*see* Ch. 1). Although British and American settlers were living there, it had remained under Spanish rule until 1822, when, following the example of Mexico, it became an independent State but with some allegiance to Mexico.

During the election campaign for a President in 1844, one of the slogans was *Fifty-four-forty or fight*, meaning that Britain must be forced to hand over the whole of Oregon to the United States. Another question to be decided concerned Texas—it had separated from Mexico in 1837, and become an independent republic, but now it wished to join the Union. The new President, James Knox Polk, was elected because of his "firm attitude" about Texas, which was allowed to join the United States in 1845.

President Polk made a fresh effort to secure Oregon. Although he did not win the demanded latitude "Fifty-

four-forty", he reached a peaceable settlement with Britain by which the U.S.A. received Oregon territory reaching to latitude 49° North—the "line" between the States and Canada. He then planned to annex California.

There was ill-feeling at that time between the United



States and Mexico, because Texas had been admitted to the Union, but *Mexico* had no intention of declaring war on her powerful neighbour. Polk, however, was ready to make war if he failed to get what he wanted in any other way. Mexico refused to sell California and New Mexico. Polk then sent orders to the Commander of the U.S. Pacific naval squadron to seize San Francisco if Mexico declared war, and hints were given that California would be welcomed into the Union if she decided to break off her connexion with Mexico.

Still Mexico did not declare war, even when U.S. troops invaded her territory. But frontier skirmishes took place; a small band of Mexicans crossed the *Rio Grande* into the United States. Then Polk asked Congress to declare war, since Mexicans had invaded the country and shed American blood. War was declared in June, 1846, and a month later some American settlers in the Sacramento Valley of California staged a rebellion and declared their independence. Some American troops advanced into Mexico by land; others invaded from the sea, and seized the port of Vera Cruz. The Mexican capital was taken in June, 1847.

The following year Mexico had to surrender, and a Peace Treaty was signed by which the U.S.A. received Upper California and New Mexico, a vast territory covering the present States of New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and part of Colorado; and the sum of 18 million dollars was paid to Mexico. The Pacific had been reached, and with a few unimportant changes the boundaries of the U.S.A. became what they are today.

At the close of the year 1848, within a week of the United States taking over their new territory, gold was discovered in the mill-race (or stream) of a Californian ranch. The news quickly spread, and when it became known that rich deposits were thought to exist in other places, the greatest *gold rush* in history began. The first arrivals were the *Forty-niners* (1849), genuine miners for the most part, and content to dig for luck.

Soon from all over the continent and beyond, by land and by sea, came seekers for fortune, clerks and lawyers,

doctors and farmers, tradesmen and craftsmen, numberless work-shy people seeking a short cut to wealth, and countless lovers of adventure for its own sake. It is said that 100,000 men arrived in California in that exciting year '49.

In our day the chief source of gold is the South African Rand, where powerful and expensive machinery is needed to crush the rock and extract the grains of gold. But the "forty-niners" required little beyond picks and shovels and pans for washing the "pay-dirt", for the



The Great Trek to the West

E.N.A.

A picture of those days showing settlers on their way to California. They are here shown spending their last day on the plains before crossing the mountains.

gold was found in the gravel of the river beds and banks, and was separated from the dirt by washing.

Wooden houses sprang up round each "digging", and there were drink-bars and gambling-saloons which were haunted by other *gold-diggers* eager to dig nuggets not from the earth but from the pockets of the real miners.

In a few months *San Francisco* grew from a small cluster of houses to a city of twenty thousand people. In a year, California, which had possessed a scattered population of Mexican ranchers, Jesuit missionaries and American farmers, held 100,000 Americans, and in 1850 it became a Union State. The "gold-rush" brought

all classes to "the Coast" as it was called, and gave California a start in population that would otherwise have taken many years to build up. Even when the "gold fever" died down after three or four years, many gold-seekers remained as farmers and fruit-growers, while the advantages offered by climate and new opportunities brought still more settlers, and in due course the greatest *Cinema-Film* industry in the world (see Ch. 21).

## CHAPTER 13

### KING COTTON

The people of the *Southern States* on the Atlantic seaboard had always differed from their northern neighbours. Many of the early Southern settlers had been Stuart squires who had left England before or during the Civil War between King and Parliament. Their descendants lived as land-owners on their estates and kept up a certain culture and polish which was despised by the more hardy and rugged Northerners with their Puritan tradition. But by the close of the 18th century the Southern States seemed faced with hopeless ruin. The old crops—rice, indigo and tobacco—were less profitable than they had been and many planters were deeply in debt.

At that time there was an increasing world demand for *cotton*, and some experiments were made in the growing of this crop. But when eight bales of cotton reached England in 1784, the Customs House Officials seized them, declaring that it was not possible to grow cotton in America! A few planters persevered with the new crop, but the seeds contained oil and had to be removed; they made the fibre greasy. The removal of the seeds from the short fibres was a tedious business. It took a slave a month to free a bale of cotton from seed. In 1791 the world production of cotton amounted to 490,000,000 pounds, to which the United States contributed only 138,000 pounds.

The following year, *Eli Whitney*, a young American student from Yale College, came to Georgia, hoping to

get a post as a teacher. He was disappointed, and gladly accepted the invitation of Mrs. Nathaniel Greene to spend a few weeks on her plantation at Savannah. Whitney was clever with his fingers and pleased his hostess by making several novel little gadgets for use in the house. This led Mrs. Greene to introduce him to



Ministry of Information

some planters who were anxious to get a machine for removing the cotton seeds.

In a few weeks Whitney completed a model consisting of a revolving wooden cylinder, encircled by rows of slender spikes which dragged the cotton fibre through a grid with wires too close together to allow the seeds to pass. The seeds dropped into another compartment, and a revolving brush freed the fibre from the spikes.

This machine, which was known as the *cotton-gin*, would remove the seeds from a thousand pounds of cotton in the time it would take a slave to clean only five pounds, and a slave could easily use it.

Whispers of Whitney's success leaked out, and some rogues broke into his workshop in order to steal his machine and copy it. Whitney then moved north to New Haven in Connecticut where he set up a factory for making cotton-gins. The demand for the new machine was greater than his factory could supply, and soon local blacksmiths and others copied the idea and made gins. Like many another inventor, Whitney himself made little profit from his important invention, and after a few years he gave up making gins and made guns instead. He received large orders from the Government and so made a fortune before he died in 1825.

The invention of the cotton-gin completely changed the history of the Southern States. Cotton became "King". Men who owned numbers of slaves bought tracts of rich black earth in the western districts. Everywhere new cotton plantations sprang up, and with them slavery seemed even more firmly rooted. In 1794, the Southern States raised 1,600,000 pounds of cotton, and the following year nearly four times as much. By the year 1800 the produce of the plantations had risen to 35,000,000 pounds.

Everybody wanted to share in the new money-making crop and to grow cotton. "The lawyer, and the doctor, and the schoolmaster, as soon as they earned any money, bought land and negroes, and became planters. The preacher who married an heiress or a rich widow became the owner of a plantation. The merchant . . . . passed his old age watching the cotton plant spring from the fresh-ploughed ground."

The cultivation of cotton required much labour. Many of the plantations had formerly been forest land, and constant weeding was needed to keep the land free from tiny saplings and other unwanted plants. Practically only negro labour could be had in the Southern States; and as America, in agreement with European countries,

had stopped importing negroes from Africa, the price of slaves already in the country had gone up. It often cost a would-be planter less to buy land for a plantation than it did to buy slaves to work it, and in any case he had to keep them in good seasons or bad, while the Northern manufacturer dismissed men for whom he could not find work. But with the new cotton-growing industry, the slaves seemed as necessary to the Southern planter as machinery was to the Northern manufacturer, and *slavery spread with cotton*.

The Northern States could not grow cotton, but they began to set up mills for spinning and weaving it. Britain was the home of the Industrial Revolution, and had become the "workshop of the world". She had no wish to see other countries setting up cotton mills and taking



Farm Security Administration  
Picking Cotton

her trade, and so the export of the machinery was forbidden. It happened, however, that Samuel Slater, an English cotton-mill worker, had settled in Rhode Island. He tried to remember how the machines he had worked in England were built, and he succeeded so well that the foundation of the New

England *textile* industry was laid. While plantations increased in the South, new towns with factories and better transport were springing up in the North where a new class of capitalist employers arose.

The increasing cotton crops brought expanding trade between the Southern States and Europe. Four-fifths of the cotton raised were exported to England and France ; less than one-fifth went to the New England mills. The ships that carried cotton to Europe were glad to bring back manufactured goods at a cheap rate rather than load up with profitless ballast. As a result the Southerners could buy manufactured goods from Europe cheaper than they could get them from the North.

The two groups of States—the South and the North

(with the West)—were always different in their ideas and way of living. By the middle of the 19th century, they had drifted so far apart that when the question of slavery became urgent, the Union was in danger of coming to an end. As the population spread westwards, it became usual to create new States in pairs—Slave States south of the Ohio, Free States to the north of it.

*To sum up the growth of the United States :—*

When the British colonies became the United States, they extended from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi. During the 19th century, the vast "*Wild West*" was gradually colonised by waves of pioneers from the States and of emigrants from Europe. When Napoleon in 1803 sold Louisiana to President Jefferson, this added twelve states to the Union. Then in 1819 the Union bought Florida from Spain. In 1845 Texas, a Mexican province, was annexed. But Mexico objected, the Union fought, and from this war she gained California, and the whole *South-West*—Colorado, Nevada, Wyoming—an empire in itself. There had been a dispute about the *North-West* and the Canadian boundary, and in 1846 the Oregon Treaty with Britain gave the Union what became the States of Idaho, Oregon and Washington. And so, when Civil War began in 1861, the U.S.A. had expanded from Canada to Mexico in Central America and from ocean to ocean.

But already, thirty years earlier, the Western democrat, President Andrew Jackson, had warned the Southern States: "Our Federal Union—it must be preserved"; and, again, "Disunion by armed force is treason".

## CHAPTER 14

### "A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM"

*"Of all the wars that men have fought in their hard pilgrimage, none was more noble than the great Civil War in America nearly eighty years ago".—Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, Speech, 1 Oct. 1939.*

For many years there was increasing difficulty between the Northern and Southern States on the question of *negro slavery*. In early days some of the Northerners had owned slaves, chiefly employed as household servants,

but by the end of the 18th century these had become free. The British Government abolished slavery within the Empire in 1833. The people of the Northern States thought their nation should do the same, and the Western States were also opposed for the most part to slavery. But the *Southern planters*, busy growing cotton, rice and sugar, declared that such action would ruin them.

Among those who were keenly interested in this problem was *Abraham Lincoln*, once a boy of the Kentucky backwoods, who after working on a farm, and taking cargoes on a flatboat to New Orleans, and acting as store-keeper, village postmaster and surveyor, had managed to study to become a lawyer. When he was only



Alexandria, Virginia *E.N.A.*  
The premises of Price & Birch,  
slave dealers until 1861

twenty-five, he had been elected to the Assembly of the State of Illinois, and from 1847 to 1849 he represented that State in Congress at Washington. Then for some years he gave his time to his own work as a lawyer, but soon he became known as one of the leading opponents of slavery.

Abraham Lincoln was a remarkable-looking man. His tall figure (he was six feet four) towered above the rest in any crowd. His fine rugged features were those of the pioneer and frontiersman who had spent his early life in the wilderness of the West—ever “the most democratic part of America”. *Honest Abe* was a great democrat. “Friend”, said he, once, “the Lord prefers common-looking people; that is why he made so many of them”. And again: “You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you can’t fool all the people all the time”.

For six years Lincoln travelled about making speeches in favour of freeing the slaves. The novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was written in 1852 by a Northern author named Mrs. Stowe, and this famous book caused many people

to sympathise with the slaves. Then in 1859 *John Brown*, a descendant of one of the "Mayflower" settlers, tried to start a rising in the South against slavery, but he was tried for treason with six of his followers and hanged. But in the words of the favourite marching song of the Northern army, set to an old negro tune, *His soul goes marching on*.

When it was suggested that Lincoln should be the next President, the Southern States declared that if he was elected their States would leave the Union, but this statement was not taken too seriously. Lincoln referred to the threat in one of his speeches: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently *half slave and half free* . . . . I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided".

In 1861 Lincoln did become President. Seven of the Southern or Cotton States, led by South Carolina, then proclaimed that they had left the Union. They formed the Confederate States of America, elected Jefferson Davis as their President, and prepared for their War of Independence. The Confederates fired the first shot; they captured Port Sumter, which guarded the port of Charleston, and *Civil War* between North and South had begun. Lincoln was determined to save the Union. He called for 70,000 volunteers, and while the men and boys of Northern towns and villages marched to answer his appeal, four more States joined the South.

The first important battle was fought at Bull Run in Virginia, in July, 1861, and ended in the defeat of the Northern force. It was in this battle that General Lee galloped back to his men shouting: "Look, there is Jackson standing like a *stone wall* ! Rally behind the Virginians ! " and in this way "Stonewall" Jackson got his nickname.

In this first year of the war Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's splendid Battle Hymn of the Republic—*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord*—was written to take the place of the John Brown song, and it was sung to the same tune.

"My paramount object in this struggle", wrote President Lincoln in the second year of the war, "is to *save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy slavery*. If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it. What I do about slavery and the coloured race, I do because it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I trust and believe it would help to save the Union". In January, 1863, Lincoln proclaimed the end of slavery in the United States—for "slavery must die that the Union may live".

The Southern States, under their generals, Stonewall Jackson<sup>1</sup> and Robert Lee, were at first the more successful. The Northern States were more populous and more wealthy. The South hoped *King Cotton* would win the war—that is, that England and France would be forced by lack of raw cotton for their industries, to come to their aid. (About this time experiments in growing cotton were being made in Egypt and India.) The Northern States had set up a blockade to prevent the export of cotton to England and elsewhere, but recent crops had been very heavy, foreign warehouses held large stocks, and it was not until the end of 1862 that the supply began to dwindle.

Then thousands of spindles, especially in England, stopped, and great numbers of Lancashire mill-hands were idle, but the sympathies of these unemployed were with Lincoln and the slaves. "The poorer classes (in England) then had many relatives in the Northern United States who often wrote home to say what a fine land they had found . . . . America was better understood in the cottages than in the mansion".<sup>2</sup>

If *Cotton* was King in the South, *Corn* was becoming King in the North. For Britain to make war in order to break the blockade on cotton would mean cutting off supplies of wheat imported into Britain from America. Just at that time harvests were bad in England and elsewhere. Britain remained neutral. But it was nearly war when a Northern man-of-war, the *Trent*, took two South-

<sup>1</sup>For his character read Whittier's *Barbara Frietchie*

<sup>2</sup>Trevelyan: *British History in the Nineteenth Century*

ern agents off a British steamer. However, the Northern States gave way, and they told John (Bull):

"We give the critters back, John,  
'Cos Abraham thought 'twas right ;  
It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,  
Provoking us to fight".<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that ironclad vessels were now used for the first time in naval history, and by the Northerners, but their Admiral Farragut preferred his wooden flagship and refused (as he said) to "*go to hell in a tea-kettle*". Southern agents in England managed to launch three swift cruisers, the best known being the *Alabama* which did much damage to the shipping of the Northern States, and after the war Britain had to pay £3,000,000 to the United States as damages and for not with "due diligence" remaining neutral.

At last the North found two able generals, Grant and Sherman, and by April, 1865, the Southern resistance had been worn down and its resources exhausted. The Southern general, Robert Lee, surrendered to the Northern commander, General Grant; and when a cheer broke out from the Northern ranks, General Grant checked it, saying, "The war is over; the rebels are our countrymen again".

This tragic Civil War, when "*Brothers' Blood*" was so freely shed, had lasted four years (1861-65). No less than 620,000 Americans perished, either killed in battle, or dying of wounds or of sickness. Lincoln had many difficulties to face besides the universal sufferings caused by the war. There was distrust and war weariness, and quarrels between his ministers. But he never lost faith in the rightness of his cause, and he felt no bitterness towards his foes. His great desire was that the war should result in "*a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth*".

A month before the end of the war, Lincoln was elected to serve a second term as President, and then made another of his memorable speeches: "With malice

<sup>1</sup>We are indebted to Warner & Marten's *Groundwork of British History* for this verse

towards none, with charity for all, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations". Peace was concluded on the 9th April, 1865. Lincoln refused to hang any of the rebel leaders: "We must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union". But he was unable to carry out his plans for restoring union and good fellowship, and much of American history since 1865 is concerned with the problems arising out of the Civil War. The South slowly recovered, and its secret society called the *Ku-Klux-Klan* wreaked its vengeance on the unworthy "scalawags" and "carpet-baggers" and Negro governments that were plaguing the South.

By 1876 the "tyranny" of the triumphant North over the South ended. "The war was won—the Union was preserved; but peace and love and honesty and brotherly kindness had fled with Lincoln's soul" (Adams).

Five days after the Peace, while attending a gala performance in the theatre at Washington, Lincoln was shot by a half-crazy Southerner, and died a few hours later. "And now", said one who was with him, "he belongs to the ages".

"O Captain ! my Captain ! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring ;  
But O heart ! heart ! heart !  
O the bleeding drops of red !  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead."

*Walt Whitman*

Two famous Americans, of vastly different upbringing, and separated by nearly a century, had by their wise leadership made possible "a new birth of freedom" for mankind. George Washington, the heir of squires, made the Union possible, and Abraham Lincoln, the son of the back-woods, saved the Union from destruction.

"Let us have faith that *right rules might*, and in that

faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we see it", said nobly, and for all time, Abraham Lincoln, "almost the greatest man that ever lived".

### THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

*(Given on Nov. 19, 1863, at the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg soon after the battle at that place. This Address is also a noble illustration of the American ideal of democracy, and of American literature.)*

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live.



E.N.A.  
Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg,  
November, 1863

"It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, or long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under

God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth”.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865)

*President of the United States (1861–1865)*

## CHAPTER 15

### THE IRON ROADS BETWEEN ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC

Between 1850 and 1861 five new States had been admitted to the Union—Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oregon and Kansas, and they were all free (not slave) States. By 1861, when the Civil War began, the population of the country had grown to be about thirty-one millions, and at least a third of the people of the South were then slaves. By 1880, the number of States had risen from the original Thirteen States to thirty-seven. Today the *Stars and Stripes* flies over a vast Federation of forty-eight States, with a total area twenty-five times and a population three times that of Britain.

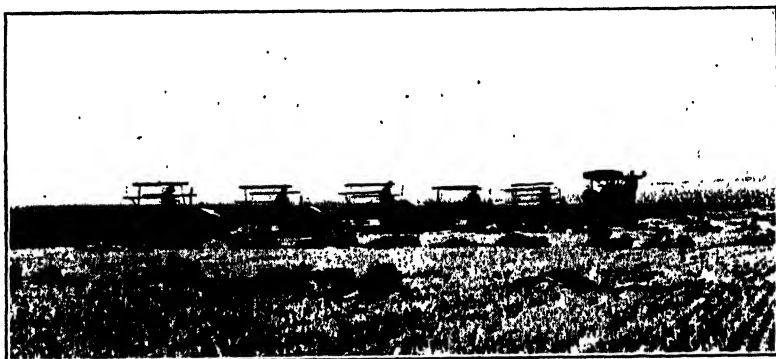
Indian trails, covered wagons, river flatboats and steamboats, macadamised roads, and canals have all played their part in the story of American travel and transport. In the early 19th century came the steam engine and the *iron railroad* and train, and this is a thrilling chapter in American history. “From the earliest times when the pioneers of the American railroad began to push their tracks westward across the continent, song, music and verse have accompanied the great adventure. Indeed, the American railway track and the American railway train figure in some of the most fascinating folk music of the New World”.<sup>1</sup>

The citizens of Philadelphia were the first to plan a railroad in America. The first engines were brought in 1829 from the Stephenson Works in England, and for many years the iron rails also were imported from England. A few years after the first English railway was opened there were twenty-three miles of railway in the State of Pennsylvania. A railway map of 1840 shows a number of short lines, with a total of about 2000 miles, mainly

<sup>1</sup>*Radio Times*, Feb. 22, 1942, notice of Broadcast, *The American Railroad*

filling up gaps between the older means of communication in use before 1830. Twenty years later, just before the Civil War, there were over 30,000 miles of railway tracks.

The coming of railways increased the demand for *iron and steel*. In the United States, as in Britain, wood was at first used as the fuel for smelting iron, but in both countries new methods made the use of coal possible, and the iron and steel industries became centralised in districts where iron ore and coal could be had. Pennsylvania soon became the centre of the iron and steel industries



Steam Tractor

of the United States. At first railway engines were built on the English model, but in due course lighter types of engines, better suited to America, were made.

The Civil War gave a great stimulus to the railways of the North where they proved valuable for the speedy transport of troops, munitions and food, in this way helping to win the War. The fact that the railway linked the Western States to the North Atlantic States rather than to those of the South strengthened the alliance against the South. The railways in the South suffered badly. These States lacked the supplies of iron and steel needed for repairs. Moreover, most of the fighting took place in the South, and invading Northern armies and retreating Southern armies tore up and destroyed many railway tracks and blew up bridges.

After the Civil War, the making of railways made still

greater progress throughout the United States. Soldiers were anxious to settle in new country; people on small farms in the East were being squeezed out by the growth of towns; sons of ruined Southern planters had to find a means of livelihood; immigrants were still coming from Europe. All these people looked towards *the West*, "the Home of the Free", where the famous McCormick reapers and other agricultural machinery were beginning to make Western farms prosperous. The *electric telegraph*, invented in 1844, was making headway. The first telegraph line in the United States connected Washington and Baltimore, and some years later a cable was laid under the Atlantic Ocean, making it possible for messages to pass between Britain and America in a few minutes. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell, a professor at Boston University, invented the *telephone*.



E.N.A.

Alexander Graham Bell starting the first New York-Chicago conversation (1892)

In the midst of the Civil War, the United States Congress passed, and Abraham Lincoln signed, a Bill granting a charter for the making of a railroad through the plains and woods, deserts and mountains right across the vast continent—the *Union Pacific Railway*.<sup>1</sup> It was built in two sections. One portion started westward from the little town of Omaha, in Nebraska; the other section started eastward from Sacramento in California. The actual work on both sections began in 1865, and there was keen rivalry between the Irishmen employed on the eastern section and the Chinese workmen on the western. Often as much as eight miles of track were laid in one day. The two sections met at Promontory Point in Utah, where on the 10th May, 1869, amid great rejoicing, a *golden spike* was driven in to complete the work, one of

<sup>1</sup>Read Zane Grey's novel, *The Roaring U.P. Trail*, and Winston Churchill's *Mr. Crewe's Career*

the greatest engineering feats attempted up to that time. The telegraph wires which had kept pace with the railway track clicked the news to the World—that the United States was now spanned by the iron road linking the Atlantic with the Pacific.

Three other *continental lines* were then begun. The Northern Pacific Railway was to run from Lake Superior across Minnesota, through the Dakotas, the wonderful Yellowstone Valley and the Rocky Mountains to Portland in Oregon. The Southern Pacific Railway was to run from New Orleans across Texas and on to Los Angeles and San Francisco. The Santa Fé line was to run from Atchison in Kansas, through Colorado and the Rockies to Santa Fé in New Mexico, and thence to San Diego in California. In fifteen years all three lines had reached the Pacific, and these, together with many local railways, added no less than 122,000 miles of track to the United States Railways.

The new railways opened up great areas for settlement. For instance, *Nebraska*, described in Government reports of 1854 as desert country quite unfit for agriculture, and shown on maps of that time as part of the “Great American Desert”, developed within fifteen years into a leading farming district with a million people, and became a Union State. But the Indians suffered. Their wide hunting-grounds were lost, and they were given limited reserves instead.

The later history of American railways has been varied by periods of great prosperity when States and cities competed for the favour of the railway companies, and bitter disputes and strikes which held up business and caused railway promoters to be looked upon as public enemies. But a series of Federal laws have been made to protect both the railway companies and the general public.

One name connected with American railways is known by travellers all the world over, George M. Pullman, the inventor of the *Pullman Car* with its restaurant and its comfortable bunks, in which passengers on very long railway journeys can sleep in comfort at night.

## CHAPTER 16

## ON THE LONG TRAIL WITH THE COWBOYS

Texas, once a part of Mexico, and now one of the South-central States, was before the Civil War a great *cattle-raising* area. The long-horned beasts, descendants of the cattle brought to America by the Spaniards, gave tough meat and were of value chiefly for their hides; but when crossed with Hereford bulls brought over from England, good beef cattle were produced. When the Civil War came in 1861, Texas joined with the Southern States, but was cut off from her allies by the Northern armies in occupation of the Mississippi.

There were thousands of cattle on the Texan ranges, but their owners were faced with ruin for lack of a market either with friend or foe. Then Joseph McCoy, a townsman of the little frontier town of Abilene, suggested that the cattle should be driven along the *Chisholm Trail* across the plains to Abilene, there to be sold and sent over the new railroad to Kansas City.

In the early days the herds were merely driven northward in summer, but it was discovered that they could be left to be pastured on the plains during winter, flourishing there as well as the buffalo did and coming out fat and sleek in spring. Land still the property of the government could be used as free pasturage, from central Texas northward to Wyoming, Montana and the Canadian border. In 1866 the Union Pacific Railway provided a convenient point for loading live cattle in Nebraska. Two years later, the *refrigerator car* was invented which made it possible for animals to be slaughtered in Chicago or Kansas City, and the meat to be delivered in good condition to the crowded centres of population in the north-eastern States. With the invention of artificial ice and *canning machinery*, even the English market was brought within reach of the Far West.

The plan of fattening cattle on the Great Plains brought a new and picturesque figure—the *cowboy*—into the pages of American history. Americans from the Eastern States, and even some Englishmen, seeking an adven-

turous and sporting means of winning a fortune, formed the Wyoming Stock Raisers' Association. Each member set up his headquarters somewhere between the Rio Grande and the Canadian border. In the absence of any other law, they managed their own affairs, and employed cowboys, or "bucaroos", to look after their great herds of cattle.

The first and best cowboys were Texan borderers. They had learned their horsemanship from the Mexican,



A Cattle Round-up

*Farm Security Administration*

whose picturesque dress they copied—a broad-brimmed hat, shaggy trousers, a coloured silk scarf round the neck, high-heeled boots and long, jangling spurs. They rode rough, half-wild horses, called broncos or mustangs, vicious little beasts of Spanish origin, as hardy as donkeys, as swift as an Arab steed, and equipped with high-horned Mexican saddles. The cowboy had to be skilful in throwing the long rope or leather thong with a noose, known as the lasso or lariat, as he galloped in pursuit of runaway animals.

The real cowboy, unlike those seen on the Films was

slightly built, courteous and reserved in manner, and pithy in speech. He had the swagger common to horsemen of the wilds, but he was quick and brave. His was no easy task. He must be ready to fight attacking Indians or wolves, and to guard the herd from "rustlers" or cattle-stealers. He must be able to break-in a bronco and deal with *prairie fires*.

When the herd was rounded up for the night, the slightest unusual sound might startle them, cause them to spring up in panic, and perhaps scatter for miles around. To prevent this, the cowboys on guard rode round and round the sleeping animals, crooning a song in order to keep them quiet and calm. Here is one of the *cowboys' "lullabies"*:

"Oh, lie still, dogies, since you've laid down,  
Stretch away out on the big open ground.  
Snore loud, little dogies, and drown the wild sound  
That will all go away when the day rolls round.  
Hi-oo, hi-oo, oo-oo."

Other cowboy songs kept time with the pounding hooves along the dusty trail:

"It's whooping and yelling and driving the dogies ;  
Oh, how I wish you would go on ;  
It's whooping and punching and go on, little dogies,  
For you know Wyoming will be your new home."

Every spring the "outfit"—as the cowboys in charge of a herd were called—had to round up the beasts in appointed areas, all the way from Texas to Wyoming and Dakota. They picked out their employer's cattle by means of the marks branded on their hides, and branded the calves. Stray animals, or "mavericks", whose ownership was doubtful, were shared between the herds. The breeding cattle were left behind, but the three-year-olds and four-year-olds were taken along the "*long drive*", sometimes hundreds of miles to the nearest *cow-town* on a railway. Scouts rode on ahead to find the best grazing grounds. When the cow-town was reached, there the cattle-buyers met them, made the purchases and sent them off to Chicago or Kansas City. In 1871, more than 600,000 cattle followed the long trail from Texas to the north.

In the United States the era of the cowboy lasted only twenty years. By 1885, the range would no longer support the animals for the "long drive". Railway lines were criss-crossing the plains. Successful experiments in sowing "winter wheat", on the lower levels of the rolling plains and in the Great American Desert, brought about fierce competition between *corn-growers* and *cattle-kings*. Then came the terribly severe winter of 1886-7 during which thousands of cattle perished in the open.

After this disaster, the cattle-owners marked out homestead claims in the names of their "outfits" and fenced in vast areas to which they had no claim. So in a remarkably short time the enclosed *cattle ranch* took the place of the open range. The ranch hands work within the limit of wire fences. Motor-cars, with perhaps a fully saddled pony in a trailer, enable them to reach the limits of their land, and the freedom, danger and delight of the "long trail" are things of the past.

The *Wild West* and the cowboys have disappeared for ever—except in the cinema. A modern traveller through the United States has written: "As for cowboys, I might as well look for sabre-toothed tigers prowling about in Hyde Park".

## CHAPTER 17

### "DRAKE'S FOLLY", OIL WELLS AND MOTOR-CARS

The eighteen-sixties were eventful years in the history of the United States. They gave a new birth to the Union of States and they gave four million slaves their freedom; new railways were planned; new districts were opened up; the industrial revolution made rapid progress. One of the greatest discoveries was the vast wealth stored in the earth in the form of mineral oil.

For a long time people in western Pennsylvania had noticed oil oozing out of the hollows in certain rocks, or floating on water in wells and ponds. They often thought it a great nuisance as it made the water unpleasant to drink. *Quack doctors*, who travelled about selling "medicines", bottled some of the oil, and offered it to

their simple-minded customers as a sure cure for almost every known disease. One of these men, Samuel Kier, found that the oil could be used for lighting purposes as well as for oiling machinery. He refined and sold it. His advertisement attracted the notice of a man named Bissell, who bought some oil from Kier, and sent it to Yale University to be analysed. The result of the analysis convinced Bissell that there was "money" in oil. He formed a company, leased land in north-western Pennsylvania, and sent out an engineer named Edwin Drake to sink an oil well.

The farmers watched the work with great amusement, and called the venture "*Drake's Folly*". In August, 1859, the *first oil* was obtained at the rate of twenty-five barrels a day and a new industry was born. At that time *gas lighting* was only just coming into general use and electric light was unknown. The usual means of lighting were candles, or lamps filled with whale oil. This new oil, called *petroleum*, was found to be a great improvement.

The effect on Western Pennsylvania was amazing. The great masts (called "derricks") supporting the oil-well machinery, towered up against the sky. Quiet country roads became crowded highways along which sweating horses hauled loads of oil barrels to market. Towns sprang up almost in a night, and some after a few months of roaring prosperity faded out almost as quickly. *Pit-hole City*, for an example, did not exist in 1865; in a few months it grew into a town of twenty thousand inhabitants doing a greater postal business than any other city in the State except Philadelphia itself; a few years later the "mushroom" city had vanished, and waving fields of corn had taken its place.

Those were the days of the biggest and wildest of the many booms in the oil market. Men made a fortune in a few hours, and perhaps lost it as quickly if the oil ran dry. Sometimes underground stores of oil were tapped by accident by farmers when digging. At first they let the oil flow away over the land to some stream or river, but they soon learned that oil was not "Folly" but "Fortune", and they caught it in barrels which were

carted off with glee to the nearest railway to be sold to the refiners.

The first pipe-line was laid in 1865, and the *first oil tank* came into use a little later when refineries grew up around Pittsburgh and Cleveland. A new kind of ship, known as the *oil tanker*, was built to carry oil to countries overseas. At first sailing vessels were employed, but in 1872 the first steamer was equipped with oil tanks.

Oil which had first been regarded as a nuisance, or merely sold as a quack medicine, was being used ten years later nearly all over the world for lighting and for oiling machinery.

By the beginning of the 20th century, gas and electricity had taken the place of oil lamps, but even greater quantities of oil were needed than before, for the motor-car had come into being. Petrol, or gasoline, the spirit used as fuel for the motor-engine, is obtained from petroleum. *Petrol-driven engines* are also used in some ships, and, of course, in aeroplanes. Just in time for this new demand, oil wells were found in Oklahoma, a former Indian Reserve, and in Kansas, Texas, northern Louisiana and southern Arkansas. In 1922 vast stores of oil were found in California. The oil wells of the United States now yield 130,000,000 metric tons of oil a year, more than four times that of *Soviet Russia*, the second largest producer.

With all this wealth of oil, and an abundance of coal and iron for steel production, it is not surprising that the United States soon took the lead in the manufacture of motor-cars, an industry in which *mass-production* is brought to a high standard. This method, which means that each worker specialises in making some one part, was introduced by Eli Whitney, in his gun factory, when he was faced with a great demand for guns to supply the needs of the war of 1812-14 and had too few skilled mechanics. He found mass production was cheaper and quicker, and other American manufacturers followed his example (*see Chap. 13*).

A visit in our own days to the *Ford Motor Works* at Detroit is a wonderful experience. The visitor watches

the "conveyors" (overhead railways) bringing parts of cars or tractors to various stations where mechanics wait to unship them and fit them into the growing car or tractor which comes travelling to them on a ground railway. All work is so well planned that without hurry or fuss there is time for each mechanic, or team of mechanics, to do the work properly before the car moves on, and the conveyor brings the next parts. But slackness or delay on the part of one worker would throw the whole system into confusion. It is stated that the process of producing a car from the raw ore to the finished article can be carried out in just over twenty-eight hours.

The State of Michigan, in which Detroit is situated, makes more motor-cars than all the rest of the world put together. In August, 1941, American car manufacturers were turning out 45,000 cars a week, twice as many as in the previous year. An American recently declared, "We have cars enough to last us for ten years even if we stop making them".

## CHAPTER 18

### SPORT AND PASTIMES

American sports are very different from ours. There is no Football Association, and no Wembley Cup Final, or its equivalent. The nearest game to our Football is *Baseball*, and a very bewildering game it seems to English eyes. There are many other games played in America, but sport in America has been made "big business". In other words the various teams are run for profit just like a business or perhaps more like a travelling theatre show. Sometimes one man is the owner, and sometimes a company.

In the professional Baseball game there are *two leagues*, the American and the National. Each league consists of eight teams. The winners of each game play in what is called "The World Series", and the first team to win is called the year's champion. All the large professional teams in these two leagues are found in the eastern half of the U.S.A. There are, however, hundreds of smaller

professional and amateur teams in all parts of the United States, and scouts go out from the two league teams looking for talent in the smaller teams. A famous Baseball player is fêted like a film star, and the game gives the players a better chance to "show off." Because sports are commercialised to such a large extent, the equipment of sports grounds and the training of professionals is on a lavish scale.

*Football* is also played in America, but it is again different from ours. The game played is similar to Rugby, but there are eleven players on each side, and the players are constantly being changed so that thirty or forty players may take part in one game. The game



Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.  
A Boxing Bout

is largely played by schools and colleges, and the *professional coach* is an important member of any college staff.

The climate and nature of a country make a great difference to its sports and pastimes. The great distances in the United States prevent national events such as we have in a small country like England. The vigorous winter climate of many parts of the United States gave a good start to *ice hockey*, which became very popular. Now artificial *ice rinks* make the sport an all-year-round affair. The number of rivers and lakes has meant, too, that far more Americans have fishing as their hobby than in England. Shooting also is a sport attracting larger numbers than in England.

In *boxing* as a sport most Americans, both men and women, take an interest. The champion boxers are almost as well known in America as the Prime Minister is here. Other sports, such as tennis and golf, are also played by certain sections of the community.

Apart from sport, the American has many other pastimes. Clubs and Societies flourish in wide profusion, and the primary objects of most clubs are social and charitable like our friendly societies, but generally they possess more facilities and have their own *club houses*. In every town there are societies for all manner of objects, and competition to join them is very strong, for some are considered better than others. A far larger proportion of the American than of the British people possess motor-cars, and family *picnics* in the summer are a very common pastime.

## CHAPTER 19

### SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

It is much more difficult to give a picture of schools and colleges in the United States than in England, for there is a much wider diversity. Size has something to do with the problem, and the fact that for the schools there is no one national department such as the Board of Education in England which sees that a boy or girl in Preston is having as good an education as a boy or girl in the same sort of school in London.

The equivalent of our elementary school in America is called the *public school*, and in some towns these schools are well equipped and have good teachers. In all towns of any size there is the *High School* to which all children go. The High School is somewhat similar to our Secondary School, but it is much more of a social centre as well. Of recent years boys and girls have been staying on at the High School because of the shortage of jobs. The variety of subjects taught is often surprising and often seems to us rather amusing, for in many schools girls are taught how to use *facial make-up* and other "*social subjects*".

When we say the schools are more of a social centre we mean, too, that such activities as Bands, Pageants, Graduation Ceremonies, and Concerts are more prominent. The local newspaper always has a column or two about the activities of its local High School. Of course,

there is one great advantage in the way in which High Schools work in a country like America. The children of all classes of people, and of the immigrants, quickly get to know each other, and to feel they know how to become real Americans. The children are probably not so reserved as English children, and this is very valuable in a country like the United States.

There are some boarding schools for wealthy people's children, but they are not so numerous as those in England, and the percentage of boys and girls going to these schools is smaller. There are, however, a large number of what are called *Ladies' Finishing Schools*.

The *Universities* of the United States are numerous and varied. Some have a high standing in the world, and there are three which rank very high. These are Harvard, Yale and Princeton, and they work rather on the lines of our Northern Universities, that is, there is one central college, and attached to it are various professional schools, such as a Medical School, a Law School, and a Teachers' College. Besides the three Universities mentioned, there are others with high reputations, and graduates from these Universities have a hallmark of ability in their degrees. However, it is not necessary to have a "Charter" (as in England) to start a University in America. So if you look at certain newspapers you may see that "degrees" are sometimes being offered to people who will take correspondence courses and pay fees.

It is much easier for a *poor student* to work his way through College in America than in England, and some good Colleges allow a student to study for a few terms, go out, gain business experience and earn some more money, and then return and finish his course.

There are also some very fine and well-endowed institutions in the United States where *research* is pursued, and some are the finest of their kind in the world—the Smithsonian Institute, the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, and the Carnegie Institution (*See Ch. 22*).

## CHAPTER 20

## AMERICAN LITERATURE

"In American literature the *short story* may be said to be the classic form. While most other literature began with the saga, the poetic fable, the epic, the American began with the short story. The greatest tradition is that of the short story. It may seem a paradox to declare that this is due to the humility of the American people, but they have always been humble in letters. . . . . The tradition was set by Edgar Allen Poe, Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne, three of the masters of the short story, and of these three Poe is perhaps unexcelled in world literature . . . . . Irving's *Rip Van Winkle* is probably the best-known tale in the world".<sup>1</sup>

There are very few British people who have not read some of the famous books by American writers—and the great speeches of Washington, Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Rip Van Winkle*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Uncle Remus*, *Little Women* and *The Last of the Mohicans*, were all written by American authors, and are as popular in every English-speaking country as they are in America. The same is true of many songs which we sing without realising that their composers were Americans. These facts point to the conclusion that the humour, the ideals, and the sympathies of the Americans are very like our own.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* (see Ch. 13), perhaps the best-known of American books, was written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, the wife of a minister. This book, published a few years before the Civil War, did much to stir to action those Americans who were opposed to slavery. The story of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is not, of course, a true picture of the condition of all the slaves in the Southern States, and while many slaves suffered from brutal overseers, like Simon Legree, there were very many others who lived happy lives on the estates of benevolent masters, far happier than some of the people in our own

<sup>1</sup>From *Preface* in *Great American Stories* (Ernest Benn Ltd.). Edited by Stephen Graham. This delightful volume has also some good Negro stories.

country at that time—the “slaves” of the early industrial revolution, young factory children and workhouse child apprentices.

Few books have been more loved by our girls than Louisa M. Alcott's *Little Women*. And John Fenimore Cooper's books, *The Deerslayer*, *The Pathfinder*, and *The Last of the Mohicans*, have been favourites with successive generations of boys, while *The Spy* has been described as the first novel of real merit written in the



Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Ltd.

Scene from the film *Gone with the Wind*,  
adapted from the novel by Margaret Mitchell

United States. Edgar Allen Poe is best remembered for his *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*, and he was one of the first writers to popularise the short story and what we to-day call “thrillers”. A masterpiece which is an evergreen favourite is *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville. An author in a class by himself is Mark Twain, who wrote two immortal boys' books, *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Mark Twain, whose real name was Samuel L. Clemens, had many jobs, and he spent a long time as a pilot on the Mississippi (see Ch. 9). His other well-known books, *Innocents Abroad*, and *A*

*Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, are most amusing and witty books, and are still widely read.

Other American writers with a permanent place in literature are Washington Irving, whose two stories, *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, are much loved; Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose two novels, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables*, are still widely read; Oliver Wendell Holmes, author of three very witty books, *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, *The Poet at the Breakfast Table*, and *The Autocrat at the Breakfast Table*; and Jack London, whose *White Fang* and *The Call of the Wild*, two famous dog stories, and *The Sea Wolf*, make exciting reading. Stories of the Gold Rush of 1849 (see Ch. 12) are *The Luck of Roaring Camp* and *Tennessee's Partner* by Bret Harte—both very popular a few years ago.

"Uncle Remus" stories have a character and an appeal of their own. These negro folk stories were set down for the first time by Joel Chandler Harris in 1880. The antics of the frolicsome Brer Rabbit, and his outwitting of Brer Fox and Brer Wolf can never be forgotten.

Many famous scholars, historians and historical novelists have contributed to America's and the world's literary heritage. Among standard historical works are: Motley's *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* which is as fascinating to read as any novel, Prescott's *The Conquest of Mexico* and *The Conquest of Peru*, and Admiral Mahan's unrivalled naval histories. One of America's historical novelists is named Winston Churchill and his novel *Richard Carvel* is good reading.

The three most famous American poets are—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose best known poems are probably *The Song of Hiawatha*, and the short poems, *Excelsior*, *The Village Blacksmith*, and *The Wreck of the Hesperus*; John Greenleaf Whittier, many of whose *Songs of Freedom* are sung as hymns (*O Brother Man*; *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*; *All things are Thine*; *Thine are all the gifts, O God*; *Immortal Love for ever full*; *O Lord and Master of us all*), and Walt Whitman, "the poet of democracy" who determined that "the

working-man and the working-woman were to be in my pages from first to last". T. S. Eliot, poet and critic, is of American birth.

During the last thirty years American literature has, to quote a well-known writer, "come of age". The "vitality and distinction" of the American novel is now widely recognized. Many modern authors of great merit have been Americans and their books have had a great influence in England. Three living Americans—Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill and Mrs. Pearl Buck—have



Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Ltd.

Scene from *Gone with the Wind*

received the coveted Nobel Prize. Sinclair Lewis aims at giving a true picture of the "ordinary American" in his novels, *Babbitt* and *Main Street*. Eugene O'Neill's plays—*The Emperor Jones* and *Mourning Becomes Electra*—are the work of a clever dramatist. Mrs. Pearl Buck, the daughter of an American missionary, has written some fine books with heroic China as her scene; probably the best known is *The Good Earth*, which has been filmed.

Other famous modern writers whose books are deservedly popular in England, as well as in America, are Margaret Mitchell (*Gone with the Wind*—a magnificent story of the Civil War); Zane Grey (*The Roaring U.P. Trail*); John Steinbeck (*Grapes of Wrath*); Mrs. Willa Cather (*Shadow on the Rock*); Edna Ferber (*Cimarron*); Kenneth Roberts (*Rabble in Arms*); Rachel Field (*All*

*This and Heaven Too*); and Laura Richards (daughter of Mrs. Howe, author of the famous Battle Hymn), who also "once long ago . . . . wrote a story for children (*Captain January*) that went round the world".<sup>1</sup>

#### AMERICAN WRITERS

Washington Irving (1783-1859)	J. L. Motley (1814-1877)
J. Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)	H. Melville (1819-1891)
W. H. Prescott (1796-1859)	W. Whitman (1819-1892)
N. Hawthorne (1804-1864)	L. M. Alcott (1832-1888)
H. W. Longfellow (1807-1882)	Mark Twain (1835-1910)
J. G. Whittier (1807-1892)	Bret Harte (1839-1902)
E. A. Poe (1809-1849)	J. C. Harris (1848-1908)
O. W. Holmes (1809-1894)	A. T. Mahan (1840-1914)
H. B. Stowe (1811-1896)	Jack London (1876-1916)

#### MODERN WRITERS

Winston Churchill	John Steinbeck
Willa Cather	Edna Ferber
Sinclair Lewis	Kenneth Roberts
Eugene O'Neill	Rachel Field
Upton Sinclair	Margaret Mitchell
Pearl Buck	Ernest Hemingway
Laura Richards	Zane Grey

### CHAPTER 21

#### MUSIC, ART, DRAMA AND FILMS

Many cities in the United States have *orchestras* of world-wide fame. The orchestras of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago, are known the world over. The music we term "popular" music has had a large number of American composers, but the "serious" music, such as is played by the great orchestras, has not often so far been composed by many Americans. Youthful America as yet has had no Purcell, Mozart, Haydn or Elgar, although there have been, and are today, some very famous pianists and singers. Many of America's famous artistes have been negroes, and we in this country never tire of hearing Paul Robeson, Marion Anderson, and Roland Hayes. Among the "serious" composers, whose works are played in this country, are McDowell, Copland, and George Gershwin.

<sup>1</sup>See *Marching to Brave Music*, by Alexander Woollcott, in *The Listener*, 30 Oct. 1941.

In the realm of popular music America undoubtedly leads. *Dance music and jazz, musical comedies*, and spectacular musical entertainments, have found many composers and writers in the United States. Many sentimental songs and ballads, which are, and have been, very popular in England, have American composers. *Old Folks at Home; Clementina; Home Sweet Home* (see Ch. 8); and *John Brown's Body* (see Ch. 14), are songs



Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd.

Photographing a street scene at Williamsburg, Virginia,  
for the film, *The Tree of Liberty*

which are found in every community song book, and often are sung by people who are surprised to learn that they are American. Most of the folk music of America is of negro origin, and many negro spirituals are very beautiful and in a class of their own.

The United States, as a fairly young nation, has not yet produced many *painters* of real genius, and two of their most famous artists, Whistler and Sargent, spent most of their lives in this country. The Government of the United States are spending large sums of money

to encourage art. The most popular type of painting is what we call *fresco-painting*; that is, the painting of scenes on walls.

Until the last twenty years the United States had no great dramatist, but in more recent years their *playwrights* have had a great influence on our own. Probably the most famous is Eugene O'Neill, who won the Nobel Prize and is world famous. Other well-known dramatists are Maxwell Anderson and Robert Sherwood. Many famous modern actors and actresses are Americans.

When we speak of *films and cinemas* we think of Hollywood, which is without doubt the greatest film centre of the world. In the making of films, America leads the world. *Hollywood*, in California, has a climate that makes it a good location for the industry, for films can there be taken all the year round. Much nonsense is written about film studios and artistes, but the fact is that they work hard and lead very strenuous lives.

The film industry has made remarkable advances in the last ten years with the introduction first of "moving" pictures, then of "talking" pictures, and now of "colour" pictures (see Ch. 1). It is only thirty years ago since the "magic lantern", with the "still" slide, was thought to be fine entertainment. Even now the film industry is known as the "*motion*" picture industry, to mark the great advance from the "still" slide of the magic lantern.

## CHAPTER 22

### "BIG BUSINESS", MASS PRODUCTION AND MILLIONAIRES

When the new industrial centres were springing up in the Northern Atlantic States in the early 19th century, John Adams, a leading American, wrote, "We have one material which actually constitutes an aristocracy that governs the nation. That material is wealth". One of the first American *millionaire* merchants was John Jacob Astor, a German immigrant who settled in New York in 1783, and died in 1848 worth 20 million dollars.

After the Civil War, business was booming, helped by

the new railways. The population was rapidly increasing, providing a vast home market which offered immense prizes for manufacturers and producers on the "mass-production" plan. Men began to talk carelessly about millions who not many years before had been glad to talk of thousands. A great *get-rich-quick* period set in.

The new railways shifted trade from river-towns to the railroads. Cities grew rapidly, as for instance, *Chicago*, the home of the McCormick Reapers, Pullman Cars, and great *food canning industries*. Unfortunately the railways were often controlled by dishonest "railroaders" who, instead of a fixed rate per mile for carriage of goods, charged what they liked, and altered their charges to suit their own purpose. In 1869 the Western farmer had to pay heavily to send his wheat along the line, while wealthy oil companies were charged very little for the transport of their produce.

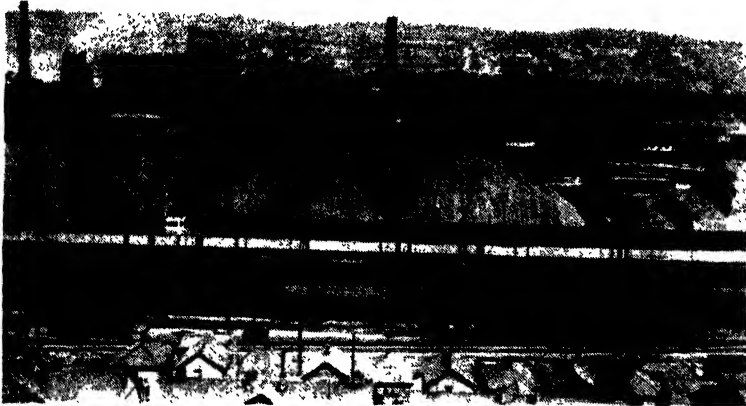
In order to strengthen their position and cut out competition, many railway companies would unite into one big company. In this way they formed a monopoly or *Trust*, that is, they got all the business into their own hands, and this enabled them to charge what they liked. It is not surprising that discontent increased among Western farmers.

Many other businesses—coal, oil, meat-packing, steel and iron concerns—passed from private owners and small companies into the hands of Trusts, often controlled by a few men. People who had taken shares in the small companies were asked to hand over their share certificates to "trustees", and although they received a fresh certificate entitling them to dividends, they lost their right to vote at company meetings and had no voice in managing the concern.

Among the most famous "*big business*" men were John D. Rockefeller (oil) and Andrew Carnegie (steel)—both the sons of poor men and both knowing how to use, and use ruthlessly, the vast resources of their country. Rockefeller's *Standard Oil Company* within a few years had control of 90 to 95 per cent of the oil refineries of the U.S.A. He became probably the richest man in the

world. Out of his vast fortune he gave large sums for educational and charitable purposes, and his Rockfeller Foundation was organised in 1913 "to promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world".

Andrew Carnegie, son of a Scottish weaver, emigrated from Dunfermline in 1848 to Pittsburgh. His was the Carnegie *Steel Corporation*. This he sold later to J. Pierpoint Morgan, and Carnegie received as his share of the profits a sum equal to £100,000,000. It was Carnegie



Steel Plant on the Ohio River

*Farm Security Administration*

who built, in 1913, the palace at The Hague "to house the peace of the world"—so tragically broken the very next year. His name is remembered for the millions he gave to endow libraries and other worthy causes. From both the Rockfeller and Carnegie endowments, Great Britain also greatly benefited.

The method of "big business" spread to other producing concerns. The Oil Trust was followed by the *Sugar Trust*, and many other trusts. These often brought much distress and unemployment as smaller firms were squeezed out. Strikes took place, and sometimes the local militia joined the strikers, and so the Federal soldiers had to be called out.

But "big business" was not all easy-money-making even for the "big" men. If fortunes were made in "booms", they were also quickly lost in "slumps". A severe slump may cause a "panic" when the whole of a nation's affairs seems to be toppling into ruins.

Such a panic occurred in the United States about 1893, and again in 1929 (*see* Ch. 25) and in both cases a Roosevelt came to the rescue. In 1893 the farmers in the West were suffering from ten years of drought, with dust storms and exhausted soil reducing the annual crop of wheat. For various reasons the price of wheat went down. Many farmers had to borrow money from loan companies, and if the money was not repaid, the farm was taken by the company. At that time the production of gold was declining, and this led to a dispute over the value of gold and silver coinage. Many banks and railways closed down; there were strikes and general distress.

After a time *gold* was found in Alaska, in the N.W. corner of North America (purchased some years earlier by the U.S.A. from Russia). This, together with gold from the new mines in South Africa, increased the gold reserve. Farming also began to improve. But the big Trusts still continued to prosper, either buying up weaker rivals or driving them out of business. In 1901 J. Pierpoint Morgan and Company formed the United States Steel Corporation with a capital of 1,000,000,000 dollars—the *billion dollar Trust*.

In September of that year President McKinley, who had been elected through the support of "Big Business", was shot down at the Buffalo Exhibition by an assassin. He died from his wounds, and *Theodore Roosevelt* succeeded him. The new President was a reformer—"Clean government and the control of Big Business"—and he started America on its "Progressive Era". He had no intention of being ruled by any one section of the nation, and he was very popular with the majority. One of his favourite maxims was, "Speak softly, but carry a big stick". Several Acts of Congress were now passed, dealing with unfair methods of business. A Department of Commerce and Labour was formed, and its leader

had a seat in the Cabinet with the duty of watching over the interests of the "plain" or "common" man and giving him a "Square Deal".

Gradually the Federal Government gained control over the business life of the nation as a whole, while the power of separate States in such matters declined. Many States received special grants to be used in social services, on condition that they accepted the new Federal laws. Customs duties which favoured "Big Business" were reduced, and a uniform scheme of taxation was applied to the whole nation.

Reform had long been necessary. "There is looming up a new and dark power", said the Chief Justice of the State of Wisconsin a generation earlier. "The accumulation of individual wealth seems to be greater than it ever has been since the downfall of the Roman Empire . . . . For the first time in our politics, money is taking the field as an organised power . . . . The question will arise . . . . *'Which shall rule—wealth or man; which shall lead—money or intellect; which shall fill the public stations—educated and patriotic free men, or the feudal serfs of corporate capital?'*"

## CHAPTER 23

### GREAT INVENTORS AND GREAT CITIES

The United States became the greatest industrial power in the world. In just over a century (1800–1925) no less than 33 million people crossed the Atlantic—the "*ferry of the free*"—to make new homes in the West. "Immigration from Europe . . . . in the North and West has reached vast dimensions. This increase was at first due to an overflow from Ireland, where famine was raging. Twenty years later it expanded by the arrival of new swarms from Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Still later between 1880 and 1890, another flood began to sweep in from Central and Western Europe, and even from Western Asia". All became "Americans" in that vast *New World* "*melting pot*" of the races of mankind.

The 1890 Census Report stated : "The unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlers that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line". By 1912, *the Frontier had disappeared*, and now the whole width of the continent from Atlantic to Pacific is occupied by Union States, forty-eight in all, with a population of 131 millions. And it is roughly as far from New York to San Francisco as it is from New York to London.

Few nations are so fortunate in having within their own land, such a wealth of the raw materials needed in

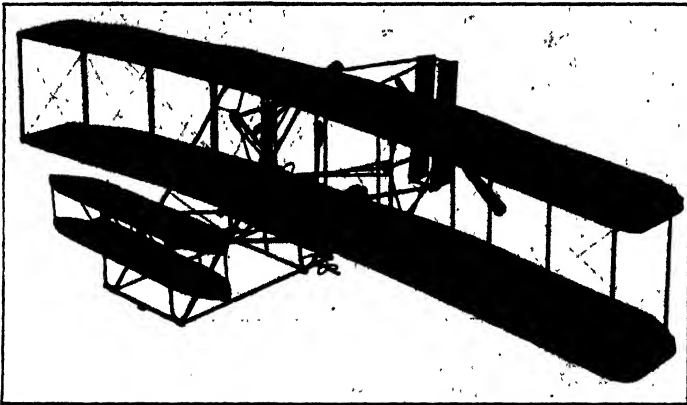


Thomas Edison, the great American inventor

modern industry—coal, iron and copper—and the oil which provides so much of the motor power of the 20th century. Yet its great resources are only just now being tapped. In 1941 it was estimated that 90,000,000 tons of steel were used in United States industry, and it was hoped that within ten years another 15 million tons would be ready for use annually.

The United States may well be proud of their *inventors* who have done so much for their industries. They include Eli Whitney, who invented the Cotton Gin (*see* Ch. 13); Robert Fulton, who built the first successful steamboat and steam warship and also a submarine ; Morse, the inventor

of the world-famous telegraph code; Alexander Graham Bell, who made the first telephone; Elias Howe, the maker of the first sewing machine; Thomas Edison, who patented no less than 1000 new ideas, including the phonograph, megaphone, the incandescent electric lamp, and many gadgets used in modern telegraphy and electric installation; and George Westinghouse, famed for electric lighting and power and its installation. Again it was the Wright brothers who made the first aeroplane—they began their famous gliding experiments on the sand dunes



The original Wright Aeroplane

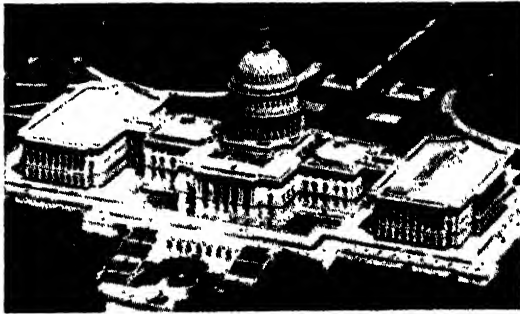
at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina about 1900—and Henry Ford who led the way in the mass production of low-priced motor-cars.

Soon the *new mass-producing industries*—motor-cars, radios, and in due course aeroplanes—aided by an extensive *Hire-Purchase* system, made it possible for almost every fifth household to have a car and almost every house a wireless-set, and the new film industry soon gave a *cinema* to every town.

The immense area of the United States naturally provides great variety in climate, soil and population. Rhode Island, one of the oldest of the States, is the smallest, being about the size of the English county of Sussex. Texas is known as "*the Lone Star State*", because it was an independent republic for nearly ten years before it joined the Union; today it is as large as England and

France together, and it has 6,000,000 people and is growing rich from three sources—cattle ranges, oil wells, and cotton plantations. Nevada, the great *silver-producing* State, is rocky and mountainous, and although it is as large as Italy, its total population is only 90,000, about that of one of our smaller industrial cities. Other contrasts are to be found. For instance, South Carolina State has an area of 30,900 square miles with  $1\frac{3}{4}$  million people, while Chicago, the second largest city in the United States and a vast railway centre, has  $3\frac{1}{4}$  million people crowded into a space of 204 square miles.

Each of the great cities of the United States has its own special features.

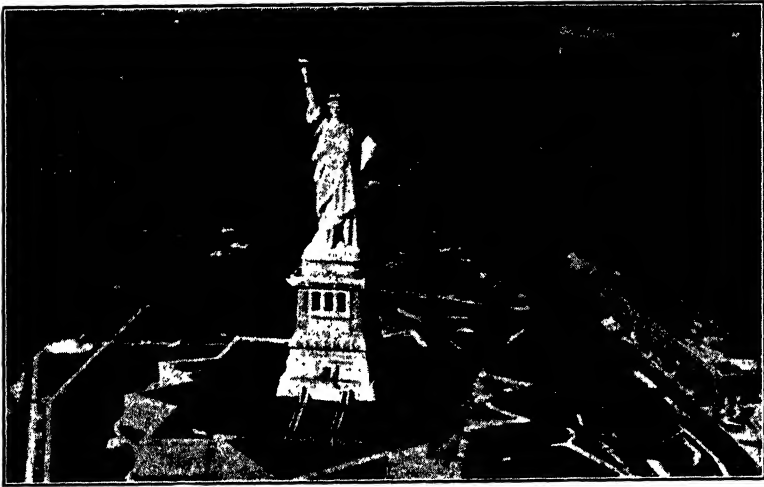


The Capitol, Washington, where the American National Congress meets

*Washington* is beautiful and stately as the capital of a great nation should be. The Capitol, where Congress meets, is a magnificent building, and the various government departments are also housed in fine style. There are pleasant villas in a large residential district, for most of the citizens are engaged in government work or business connected with it.

New York, or "*Little Old New York*" as its citizens fondly call it, is the largest city in the world after London; its mixed population includes many of German, Italian and Irish origin, who have become English-speaking American citizens. It stands on a fine harbour and at its entrance, erected on an island, is the immense *Statue of Liberty*, presented by France to the United States on the centenary of its independence. New York is famous

for its *sky-scrapers*, buildings rising forty-five and even seventy storeys. It is a city of noise and bustle, very different from *Boston* in its setting of wooded hills. It has been said that New York is a city in which to make a fortune and spend it, but Boston is a place to "live in". Boston is busy too, but there is more time for leisure and culture and the enjoyment of charming villas and pleasant parks.



The Statue of Liberty, New York Harbour

*Chicago* is a fairy city when seen by night from one of the upper storeys of an hotel. The lofty tower of the "*Chicago Tribune*" newspaper offices rises above all other buildings though some are nearly as high, and it is illuminated from top to base. In the brightly lighted streets far below, one watches people and motors, looking like ants and glow-worms moving at the foot of a lofty cliff. By day the buildings may appear less beautiful, but the Lakeside Drive, bordered by great houses and blocks of flats, runs for nearly thirty miles with only a few breaks.

*New Orleans*, largest city in Louisiana and the Gulf States and chief seaport of the Mississippi Valley, was founded by the French in 1718, passed to Spain in 1763, to France in 1800, and to the United States in 1803. The

city still keeps some of the 18th century inns and other buildings of a style midway between Spanish and French; but even New Orleans has sky-scrapers, and the centre of the city is a modest copy of the famous Wall Street, New York.

*San Francisco* (see Ch. 1) stands on a harbour entered by a narrow strait known as the "Golden Gate", which is strongly fortified. In 1906 the city was almost destroyed by an earthquake, followed by a three-days' fire, causing the loss of 1500 lives, making thousands of people homeless, and destroying property worth 500 million dollars. The city was re-built in three years, and fine concrete and steel and brick buildings have taken the place of old wooden houses. The population of San Francisco is very "mixed". There is the ghetto or Jewish quarter, Spanish or Italian quarters, and an immense Chinatown of oriental appearance. Newspapers are published in twelve European languages besides English, and also in Chinese and Japanese.

The great territory of the United States is indeed a land of infinite variety, and Walt Whitman, writing of his own country, confessed—

"I do not undertake to define thee,—hardly to comprehend thee".

## CHAPTER 24

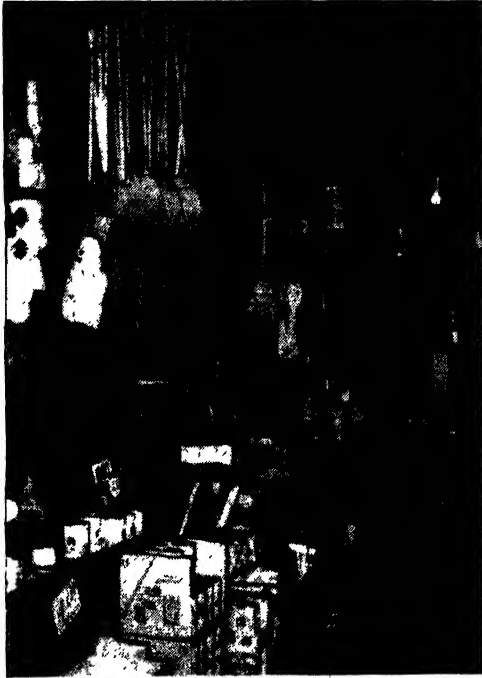
### THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

There are one hundred and thirty-one million people in the United States, and they are all *Americans*. This may sound a foolish statement, but when one considers that British, German, Dutch, Scandinavian, Italian, French, Spanish, Indian, Negro, and people of about thirty other nations have contributed to the total, it is truly amazing that in less than one hundred years they have been welded into one nation. No less than one-fifth of the total population is of German origin. The 12 million negro citizens include many in important positions—factory managers, army officers, etc.

The entry of the United States into the Second World War in 1941 was probably the first sure sign that the many peoples who make up that vast country had

become true Americans, and not German-Americans, or Irish-Americans, as they used to describe themselves at the beginning of this century. In those days the United States used to be called "the melting-pot" of the nations.

For the last twenty-five years the Government of the United States has tried by various means to arrange that immigrants from Europe are admitted only according



*Farm Security Administration*

Grocery Store, San Augustine, Texas

to the proportions of the various nationalities they think desirable. Before that, large numbers of immigrants entered the United States and found it difficult to become true Americans, for the first requisite of a United States citizen is to be able to speak English. Large numbers of Chinese had settled in San Francisco, and even today one finds in certain small districts notices both in Italian and English. It is, therefore, the ambition of all

immigrants, who wish to become true Americans, to learn English quickly, for they are cut off from their fellow citizens until they can read and converse in English.

This common tongue of the United States and the British Empire is a close bond. So is the mutual dislike of tyranny and the love of freedom which has also helped to create this great nation. A large number of the immigrants, including Germans and Italians, were people who were weary of the oppression of life in their own country, and longed to live in a place where they could be free

and escape from European entanglements. Sometimes it was political oppression which caused them to emigrate, often it was the oppression of poverty. They were without a chance in their own country to rise from the poverty into which they had been born. Whatever the cause of their immigration, it is remarkable that most immigrants were very anxious to become real citizens and be considered one hundred per cent American. Alien children easily become Americans for they go to school, and so in the second and third generation there is no language problem.

It is indeed fortunate for us that, as we have seen from the earlier chapters, the *British Colonies* were the origin of the United States; it might easily have been Spanish or French Colonies. The immigration laws passed after the First World War favoured British immigrants, and more were allowed than from any other nation.

Pride in British ancestry is still but thinly veiled, and pride in British heritage is mutual in Americans and British. We must not forget that *United States History till about 1750 is British History*, and (for example) that "for nearly half the period since the arrival of the founder of the American branch of the family, the American *Roosevelts* were British subjects" (see Ch. 5, 11).

We find the American just as proud as the Englishman of Magna Carta, of Purcell and our musicians, and of all that heritage of which we are so proud and for which we are so grateful. Lord Bryce, formerly British Ambassador in the U.S.A., has reminded the world that: "the age which sent Englishmen to settle in Virginia and Massachusetts was the age of Shakespeare and Milton, of Bacon and Newton and Harvey, of Cromwell and Hampden and Jeremy Taylor and John Bunyan, glories of the English stock whom Americans have just as good a right to claim as has England herself. *The . . . history of England for thirteen centuries . . . is a part of American history*. Whoever forgets this truth will fail to understand that history as a whole, in its most essential features."

## CHAPTER 25

### THE NEW WORLD AND THE OLD WORLD AND THE WORLD CRISIS

Today the United States is the most powerful single community in the world, with a host of great cities linked by railway and aeroplane, drawing its people from many races and religions, and educating them all in the rights and duties of American citizenship. And between it and



*Canadian National Railways*

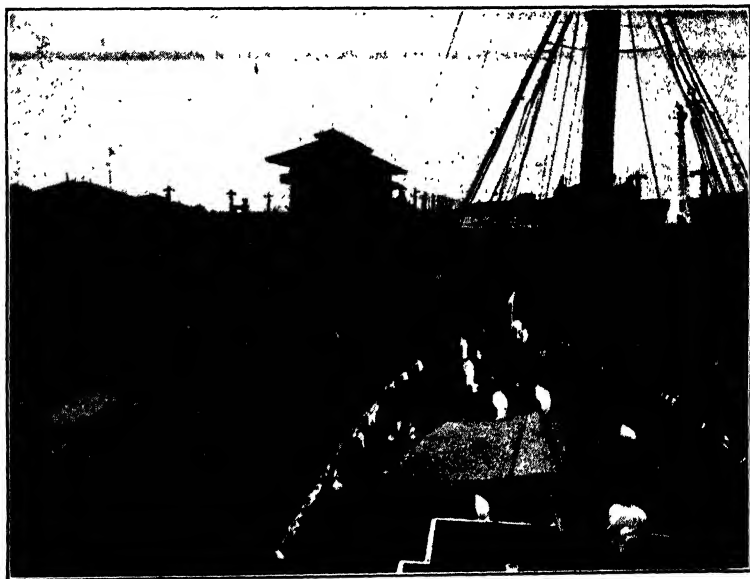
The Niagara Falls, forming part of the boundary between Canada and U.S.A.

its great northern neighbour the *Dominion of Canada*, there is no fortified frontier—only an invisible “line” 3000 miles long, the *Forty-Ninth Parallel*, a fitting symbol of the lasting peace and comradeship between the two closely allied English-speaking peoples.

A modern writer has called the present century “*the American Century*” because he believes that just as the 19th century was “the British Century”, with Great Britain playing the leading part in world affairs, so in the 20th century the United States with its wealth and its

vast resources is bound to become the outstanding *World Power*.

Until the end of the 19th century, the United States of America kept free from entangling itself in affairs of the Old World. In 1823 President Monroe announced the famous *Monroe doctrine*, which "told Europe, we (U.S.A.) would let her alone over there if she would let us alone in our New World" (Adams). This announcement was made when certain European Powers seemed about to



The Gatun Lock, Panama Canal. A steamer at the second level

interfere on behalf of Spain whose South American colonies were fighting for their freedom under the heroic *Bolivar the "Liberator"*. The Monroe Doctrine, together with George Washington's warning against "entangling alliances", became the guiding principle of the foreign policy of the United States.

However, in 1898 she annexed in the *Pacific Ocean* the Hawaiian Islands, a native state ruled by a queen. Honolulu, the capital, was fitted with a dry dock and became an important naval station, the Gibraltar of the East. In the same year Cuba, the largest of the West

Indian Islands, revolted against Spanish rule, and the United States intervened on the Cubans' behalf; there was a mysterious explosion on the U.S. battleship, the *Maine*, in the harbour of Havana (capital of Cuba), and so began the Spanish-American War. The Americans won and gave Cuba her freedom, "one of the most honourable acts in the story of mankind", and they built schools and hospitals and did much else for the Cubans. The United States now acquired from Spain in the Pacific Ocean, the Philippine Islands (named after Philip II of Armada fame).

*Theodore Roosevelt* who was President of the United States from 1901 to 1909, had previously been Assistant Secretary of the Navy. This experience made him anxious to see a canal cut through the Isthmus of Panama in Central America, in order to save warships the long and dangerous voyage round Cape Horn. De Lesseps, the French engineer of the Suez Canal, had started work twenty years earlier on a *Panama Canal*, but this isthmus was a hotbed of malaria and the work had to be abandoned. A revolution was now staged in the Colombian province of Panama and it became an independent State. Theodore Roosevelt at once made a treaty with it and undertook to build the canal. Work was begun in 1905; thanks to the advance in scientific knowledge the pest-hole was made healthy; the Panama Canal was opened to traffic in 1914, and there was now a short cut from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Eastern Asia.

When the *First World War* broke out in 1914, America hoped to keep neutral. But in 1917, after the sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German submarine, she decided to enter the War "to make the world safe for democracy"; and *President Woodrow Wilson* told Congress, "God helping her, she can do no other". This step was honoured in Britain by flying the "Stars and Stripes" from the Victoria Tower of the Houses of Parliament, the first time any foreign flag had been flown there. But, of the people of the United States 13,000,000 were themselves foreign-born, and countless others were of

foreign parentage, and many Americans did not cherish entering the war. When peace came, and President Wilson pleaded for a *League of Nations*, he found himself unable to lead his own nation into the League. Yet he at least had given "a glimpse and a vision of what the world may become when human beings are wise enough and unselfish enough to give reality to such a dream".<sup>1</sup>

The First World War was followed up by a short period of prosperity and "boom", and in 1928 a Peace Pact for the *outlawry of war* was drawn up by Mr. Kellogg, American Secretary of State. But the trade "boom" was succeeded the very year after the Kellogg Pact by perhaps the worst and most widely spread "slump" in world trade ever known—a disaster felt in many a home in both the New and the Old World. The United States suffered no less than the Old World, and at one time she had more than 15,000,000 unemployed. Farmers were in a state approaching armed revolt; 18,000 banks closed their doors; millions suddenly lost their investments; and there was general talk of revolution.

It was during this *World Trade Crisis*, causing world-wide unemployment and misery, that Germany and Italy came under the grinding tyranny of Hitler and Mussolini, and that Japan made ready to join the "Axis".

## CHAPTER 26

### THE "NEW DEAL" AND "THE FOUR FREEDOMS"

Just when in 1933 the world trade crisis and the panic it caused were at their worst, another and greater Roosevelt came to the rescue in America. *Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, a relative of Theodore, was elected President. "We have always known", said the new President in his second inaugural speech, "that heedless self-interest was bad morals; we know now that it is bad economics".<sup>2</sup> Soon he began those far-reaching plans of reform and co-operation and social welfare known to the world as the *New Deal*, with old-age pensions and unemployment

<sup>1</sup>Hugh R. Wilson: *Diplomat between Wars* (Longmans, 1942)

<sup>2</sup>*Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1937-41* (Macmillan. 4 vols.)

insurance, encouragement for Trade Unions, National Youth Schemes, public works (housing, roads, bridges, dams, telephone lines, etc.), and schemes to help farmers and those engaged in other industries.

"On several occasions," said the President, "I expressed my faith that we can make, by democratic self-discipline, general increases in wages and shortening of hours, sufficient to enable industry to pay its own workers

enough to let those workers buy and use the things that their labour produces . . . That is the simple idea which is the very heart of the *National Recovery Act*".

One of his schemes, the Tennessee Valley Authority, has been described as "the most far-reaching adventure in regional planning ever undertaken outside Soviet Russia". It is a great plan for the welfare of the farmers and others of the Tennessee Valley and



*Farm Security Administration*

Boulder Dam and power plant

for new industries and cheap electric power to work those industries.

And so this far-seeing Statesman-President managed to secure a more hopeful outlook. "He has done it with boldness, a shrewdness and a knowledge that make him the greatest living politician." "The *basic things*," he has said, "expected by our people are simple. They are: equality of opportunity for youth and others; jobs for those who can work; security for those who need it; the ending of special privileges for the few; the preservation of civil liberties for all; the enjoyment of

the fruits of scientific progress in a wide and constantly rising standard of living".<sup>1</sup>

We may compare this 20th century *charter for mankind* with Prime Minister Churchill's declaration : "I cannot doubt we have the strength to carry a good cause forward, and to break down the barriers which stand between the wage-earning masses of every land and that free and more abundant daily life which science is ready to afford".



*Associated Press*

President Roosevelt pressing the button which set off a charge of dynamite starting construction work on the bridge over San Francisco Bay connecting the Golden Gate City with Oakland and Berkeley

In 1939, when after an uneasy interval of only twenty years the *Second World War* began, the United States hoped once again to keep out of the conflict. President Franklin Roosevelt had by this time nearly completed his second term of office. He was elected for a third term, the first President to be honoured so highly by his countrymen, who remembered that George Washington himself refused to serve a third time. But the thrice-elected President knew that the world was now in the presence of

"Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined  
Great issues, good or bad, for all mankind".

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in *The Old World and the New Society*, pub. by The Labour Party, Transport House, London.

At first the United States did not actively join in the fighting. But her vast resources were placed at the disposal of Britain and the friends of freedom fighting against the enslavement of mankind by Nazi Germany. When Japan so treacherously attacked the U.S. Pacific Fleet in *Pearl Harbour*, the United States at once entered the war.

In his speech of March 15th, 1941, President Roosevelt declared : "So now our country is to be what our people have proclaimed it to be, the *Arsenal of Democracy*." Four days earlier the American Congress had passed the *Lease and Lend Act*. The President likened this new plan of Lease and Lend to a man lending his neighbour a hose to put out a fire in his house, meaning that the best defence of the United States was to aid Great Britain. To carry out this Act, billions have been voted by Congress to lease to Britain and the Allies, armoured cars, guns, aero-engines, planes, and all the mechanised equipment needed in modern warfare.

For the Second World War, the United States thus became the greatest arsenal of war weapons in the world's history, from which she could supply her own needs and help to supply the defenders of freedom, not only the English-speaking peoples but also the unconquerable and heroic peoples of *Soviet Russia* and *China*, and all others engaged in the grim contest with the Axis Powers, Germany, Italy and Japan.

Under the combined leadership of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, symbolised by their historic meetings, the American and British peoples have been drawn by world events into a *union* that binds them more closely together than ever before in their history—and like the Mississippi, "it just keeps rollin' along". And this is, perhaps, for the future of mankind, by far the most important event of the age in which we are now living, and its surest hope. ♦

This Story of America has shown that North, Central and South America all belong together, and that the "ordinary American", "who meets the common man as an equal", may have sprung from both Anglo-Saxon

and Latin stock ; for example, the American historian, James Truslow Adams, tells us (in his preface to his *Epic of America*) that his own ancestors "in one line, came from Spain to settle in South America in 1558 ; in another line, that of his name, from England to settle in Virginia in 1658". It seemed natural therefore that at the *All-or Pan-American Conference* held at Rio de Janeiro in January, 1942, it should be recommended that all the twenty countries there represented, should break off relations with the Axis Powers. It is an Argentine poet who wrote :

"A hardy front to hardship's brunt,  
Is the surest way to win ;  
The craftiest fox that ever laired,  
Like a silly bird at last is scared,  
And where he came to lift a lamb,  
On the stakes he leaves his skin."<sup>1</sup>

—José Hernandez  
(trans. Walter Owen)

Finally, for what is the "Grand Alliance of the 27 United Nations" fighting ?

President Franklin Roosevelt has told the world, in his great speech delivered at Washington, on February 23rd, 1942, on the anniversary of George Washington's birthday, and broadcast throughout the United States and in twelve different languages to the whole world :—

"We of the United Nations are agreed on certain broad principles in the kind of peace we seek. The *Atlantic Charter* applies not only to the parts of the world that border the Atlantic but to the whole world : disarmament of the aggressors, the self-determination of nations and peoples, and the *four freedoms* : freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear ; *everywhere in the world*".

These Four Freedoms are the natural outcome of the history of the English-speaking peoples of the world.

<sup>1</sup>From *The Times* : Old and True—DCCXLIX

## SUMMARY OF U.S. HISTORY

- I THE ENGLISH COLONIES, 1607–1776** (See any text book)
- II THE MAKING OF THE YOUNG REPUBLIC, 1776–1825**  
 War of Independence, 1776–83  
 Making the Constitution, 1783–89  
 Geo. Washington, President, 1789–97  
 The *Cotton Gin* (Eli Whitney), 1792  
 Louisiana bought from France, 1803  
 The first Mississippi *Steamboat*, 1810  
 War with Gt. Britain, 1812–14  
     (*The Star-Spangled Banner*)  
 The Monroe Doctrine, 1823
- III EXPANSION, SLAVERY AND CIVIL WAR, 1825–65**  
 “*To the West, the Land of the Free*”  
 The Santa Fé trail opened, 1829  
 Texas and Florida admitted into the Union, 1845  
 War with Mexico, 1846–8—  
     California (gold) and the vast South-west ceded to U.S.A.  
*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 1852  
 First *Oil Well*, 1859  
 Civil War between North and South, 1861–65
- IV “BIG BUSINESS”—INDUSTRIAL POWER, 1865–1901**  
 —from Lincoln’s death (1865) to Theodore Roosevelt’s accession (1901)  
     (a) *Reconstruction of the South*, 1865–76  
         Thirteenth Amendment to Constitution abolishes slavery, 1865  
         “Tyranny of the North” over the South ends, 1876  
     (b) *Industrial Growth*  
         First Atlantic-Pacific *Railway*, 1869  
         Edison’s Inventions (*gramophone, electric lamp*, etc.), 1877+  
         Ford’s first *motor-car*, 1892  
         The Wrights’ *aeroplane*, 1903  
     (c) *Growth of the New West and the New South*, 1865+  
     (d) *U.S. becomes a World Power*, 1898  
         War with Spain (Philippines, etc. to U.S.A.)
- V THE PROGRESSIVE ERA and FIRST WORLD WAR, 1901–21**  
 Pres. Theodore Roosevelt, 1901–09  
     Railways and Trusts regulated and the “Square Deal”  
 The 48 States complete, 1912  
 Panama Canal opened, 1914  
 U.S.A. declares War on Germany, 1917  
     (Pres. Woodrow Wilson)  
 Congress rejects League of Nations, 1920
- VI THE FIRST TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1921–41**  
 The great industrial “boom”, 1922–29  
 The great industrial “slump”, 1929–39  
 Accession of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1933–  
 The “New Deal” (vast social and political reforms)  
 The U.S.A. enters the Second World War, 1941  
 “The Arsenal of Democracy” and the “Four Freedoms”

## FAMOUS SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

(EXTRACTS FOR TODAY)

“ Whatever else may happen, whatever misfortune may befall your country (Britain) or my own, the peace and friendship which now exist between the two nations will be, as it shall be my desire to make them, perpetual.”

*President Abraham Lincoln*

“ ‘ Send your children to the United States. Your daughters will become handsomer and your sons more adaptable—they’ll be English set free ; that’s what an American is. The best thing you’ve ever done is to breed men for freer lands . . . . ’ These English are the most interesting study in the world. Just when you’d like to hang them for their stupidity, you become aware of such noble stuff in them that you thank God that they are your ancestors. And Europe would be a slave pen to-day but for them. It’s a shambles as it is.”

*U.S.A. Ambassador Walter Hines Page*

*From letter to President Wilson, May 12, 1916*

“ Will it not be in days to come the glory of the free English-speaking peoples, to whom Providence has given the widest influence and therewith the greatest responsibility that any group of peoples has ever received, if they should join in using that influence to guide the feet of all mankind into the way of peace ? ”

*British Ambassador Lord Bryce*

“ You share our purpose, you will share our dangers, you will share our anxieties, you will share our secrets, and the day will come when the British Empire and the United States will share together the solemn but splendid duties which are the crown of victory.”

*Prime Minister Winston Spencer Churchill*

“ It is not given to us to peer into the mysteries of the future. Still, I avow my hope and faith, sure and inviolate, that in the days to come, the British and American peoples will, for their own safety and for the good of all, walk together in majesty, in justice and in peace.”

*The Prime Minister of Great Britain in his historic speech to both Houses of the United States Congress at Washington on Dec. 26, 1941.*

“In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms :

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peace-time life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb.

To that new order we oppose the greater conception—the moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear.”

*President Roosevelt's Annual Message to Congress  
6th January 1941*

# THE AMERICAN STORY PICTURE SUPPLEMENT

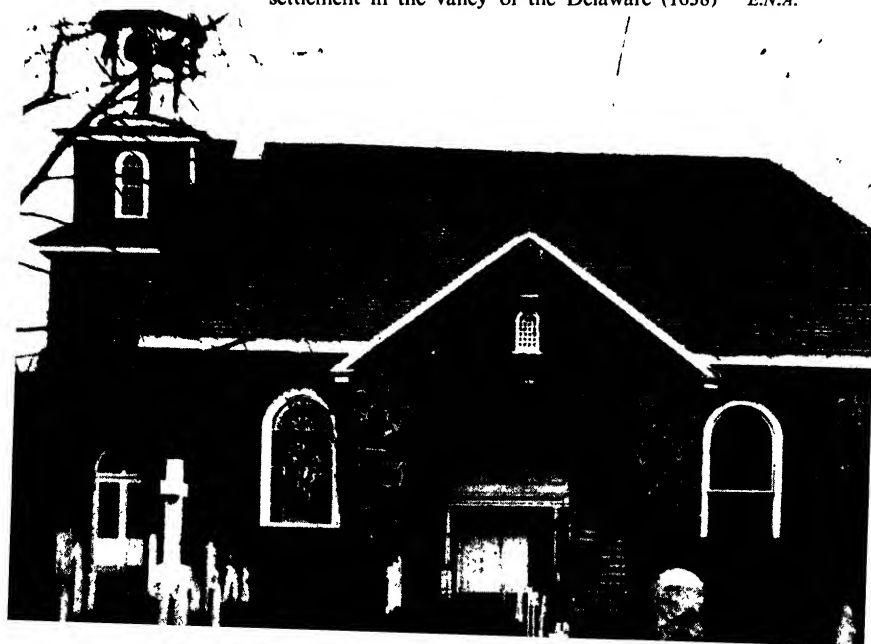
President and Prime Minister. Historic meeting in the  
Atlantic Ocean on H.M.S. Prince of Wales, 1941





Emigrants landing in Delaware, one of the 'middle' states, 1638 *E.N.A.*

The old church at Wilmington, Delaware, which dates from 1698 and marks the site of the first permanent European settlement in the valley of the Delaware (1638) *E.N.A.*

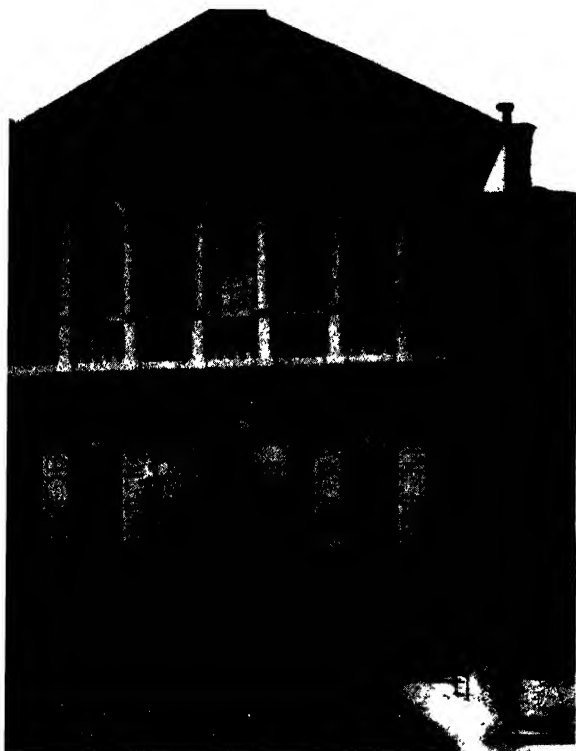




Children of American Colonists singing. Early 18th Century From "*Drums along the Mohack*" 20th Century Fox

A meeting in the House of Burgesses in Williamsburg, Virginia, 1775.  
This was the oldest elected Parliament in North America  
From "*The Tree of Liberty*" Columbia Pictures





which the first  
American Con-  
gress assembled  
in 1774. Critical  
year before the  
Declaration of In-  
dependence

*E.N.A.*

The morning church  
parade, Williamsburg,  
about 1775

*From "The Tree of  
Liberty"*  
Columbia Pictures Ltd.





British Soldiers in North America, 1775, the year before the colonies declared their independence  
*From "Drums along the Mohawk" 20th Century Fox*

Early settlers hurrying towards a settlement, while some of them act as a rearguard against Red Indians  
*From "Drums along the Mohawk" 20th Century Fox Films*





Farm and settlement life among the early settlers  
*From "Dawns along the Mohawk" 20th Century Fox Films*



The above picture shows the outside of a compound, a strong point to which settlers retired when attacked by bands of Red Indians. The picture below shows the difficulty of clearing the land with the primitive implements the early settlers possessed





An attack on the settlement by Red Indians who were a constant menace to the early settlers  
*From "Drums along the Mohawk" 20th Century Fox Films*

Early transport. The overland stage coach. This was the method of passenger transport in the 19th Century. Compare this with "The Denver Zephyr" on a later page  
*From "Stagecoach" United Artists*





The Rocky Mountains breed tough horses and tough men. The scene is typical of the North West of America, while the picture below is as typical of the South Western states on the uplands  
*From "The Return of Frank James"*  
 20th Century Fox Films

A frontier cattle town, Arizona, about a hundred years ago. In the background can be seen typical cactus vegetation

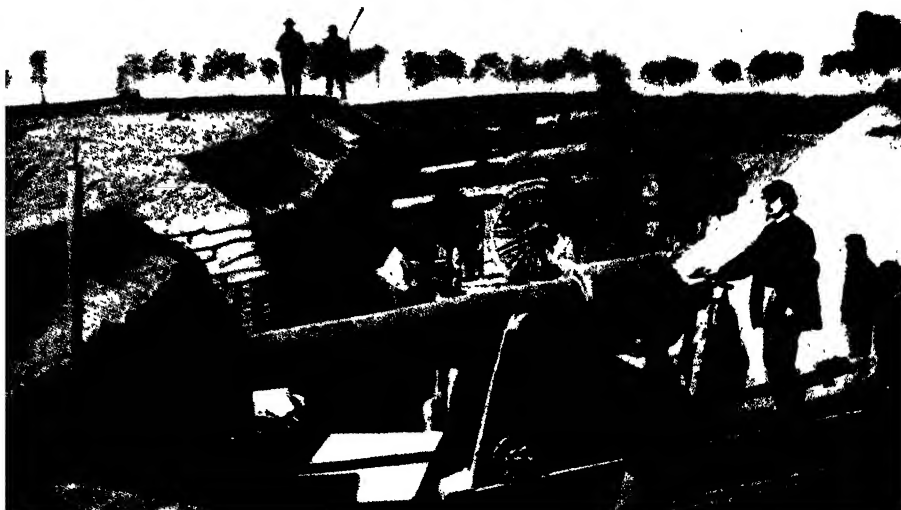
*From "Arizona" Columbia Pictures*





John Brown, the anti-slavery leader, captures the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, 1859. He was executed for treason, but 'his soul goes marching on' (see Ch. 14)  
*Vitagraph*

Union batteries, Fort Brady, 1864, during the American Civil War  
 This is one of the earliest photographs of front line action *E.N.A.*





A typical frontier town during the American Civil War  
*From "Gone with the Wind" M.—G.—M.*

The Red Indians (Sioux), under their chief, Sitting Bull, massacred  
gallant Col. Custer's little army at Little Big Horn River, 1876  
*Vitagraph*





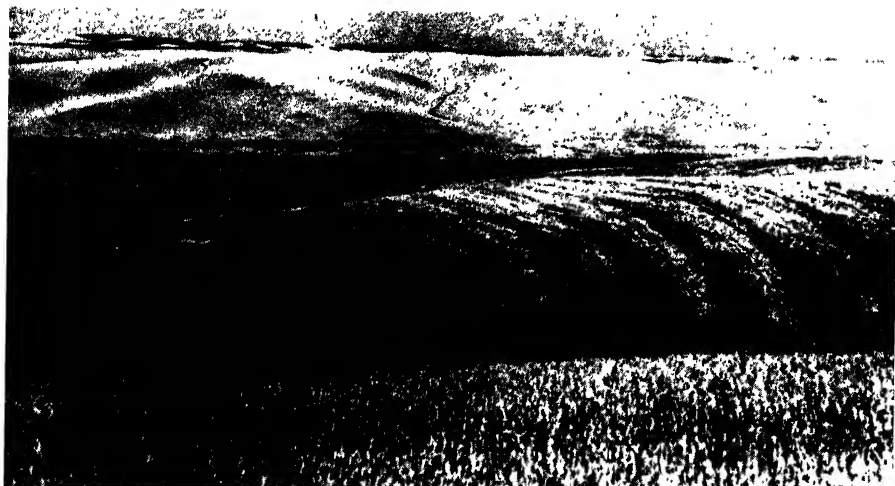
A Mid-West town about 1900

*From "The Return of Frank James" 20th Century Fox Film*

An early American motor car (1910). Note also the clothes worn by boys at the beginning of this century

*From "Adam had Four Sons" Columbia*





Winter wheat harvest  
*Farm Security Administration*



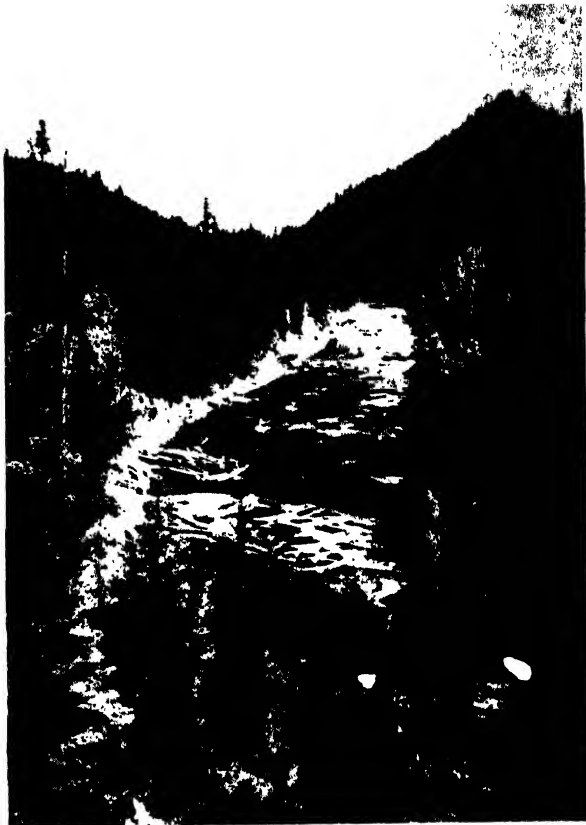
Lemon picking in Southern California. The United States grows over 300,000 tons of lemons and more than 1 million tons of grapefruits every year  
*Farm Security Administration*

Harvesting hybrid corn  
*Farm Security Administration*

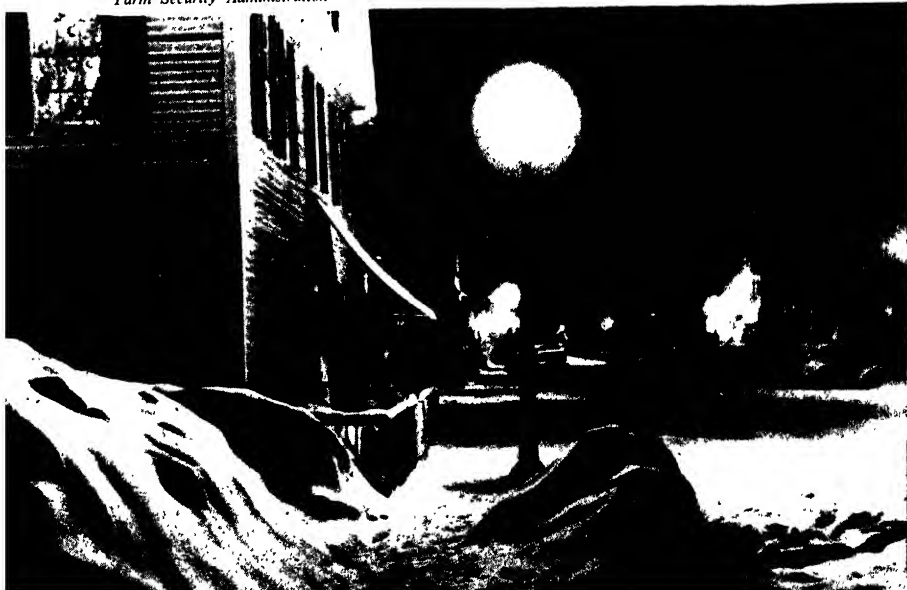


Lumbering in Priest River, Idaho—one of the Western states. Large quantities of this wood are used in the manufacture of paper. The United States produces over 11 million tons of paper annually

*U. S. Forest Service*



A Mid-winter scene in a typical country town in Vermont a New England state  
*Farm Security Administration*





Boulder Dam. At the time of the 'great slump,' when a very large number of citizens were without work, the President brought about a number of important schemes in order to provide employment. This scheme was begun in 1933 and finished 3 years later. It irrigates 2 million acres and generates 2 million h.p. It is situated on the Colorado River, on the border of Nevada and Arizona

*U.S. Bureau of Reclamation*

U.S. Naval Cadets *From "Naval Academy" Columbia Pictures*





"The Denver Zephyr," America's famous streamlined diesel train. America has had a trans-continental railway since the memorable occasion in 1869 when the Union Pacific met the Central Pacific in Utah. Today American railways carry over 450 million people a year

"Flying Fortresses" under construction, 1941. America has been called the "arsenal of democracy".

*Boeing Aircraft Co.*





Grand Coulee Dam.  
The dam is costing  
\$130,000,000, and will  
ultimately irrigate  
1,200,000 acres of the  
Columbia Basin. It is  
553 feet thick and its  
11,250,000 cubic yards  
of concrete make it the  
largest concrete struc-  
ture in the world

*U.S. Bureau of  
Reclamation*

The Capitol at Washington, home of the Congress (Parliament) and of American Law  
*From "Mr. Smith goes to Washington" Columbia Pictures*

